

# STAR WARS INSIDER

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THE  
ULTIMATE  
GUIDE TO  
EMPIRE!

**WHEN WAMPAS ATTACK!**

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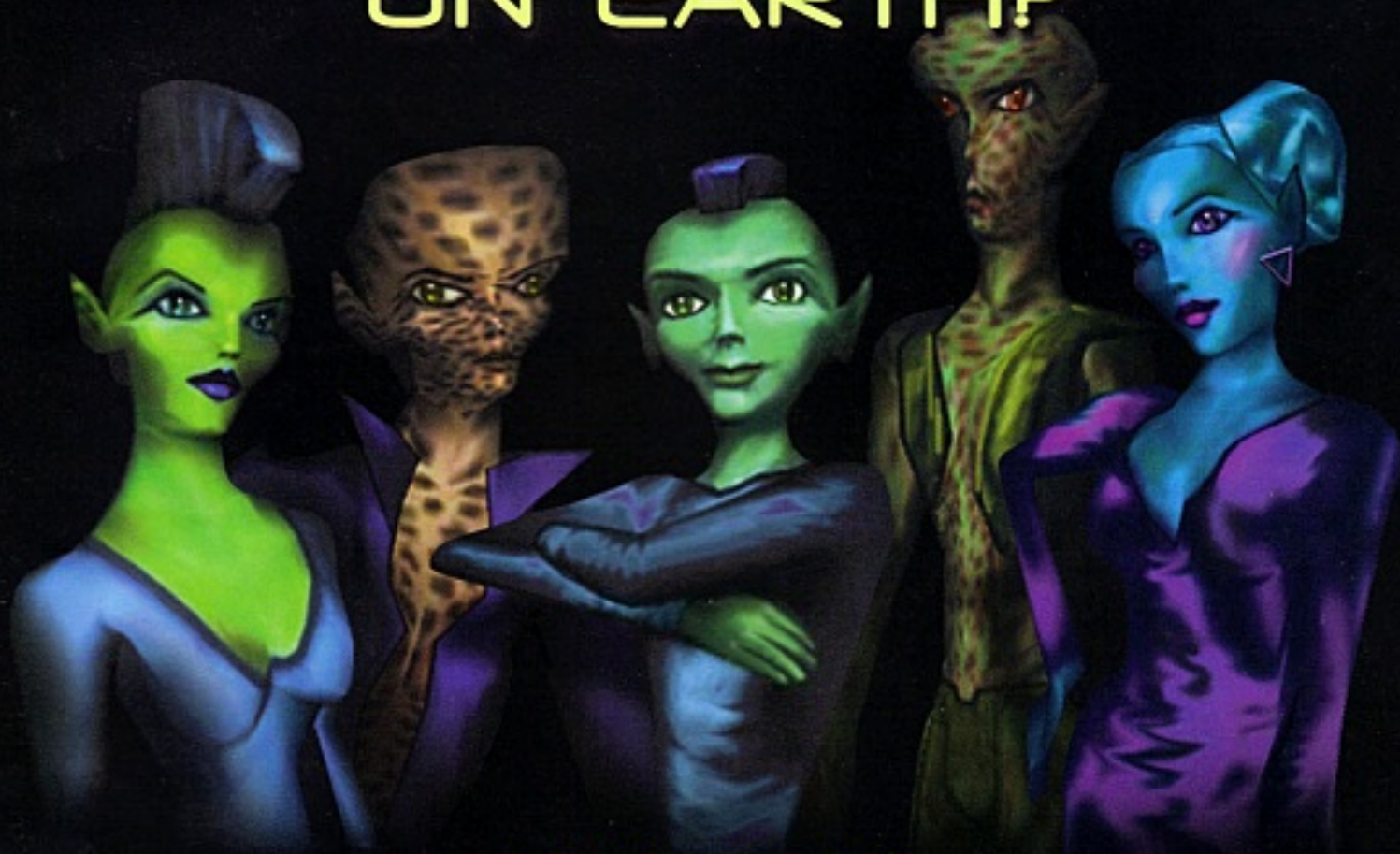
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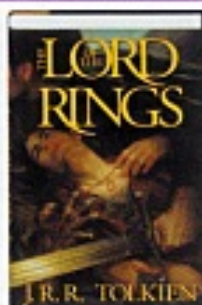


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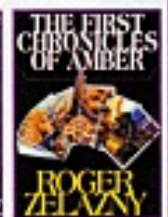
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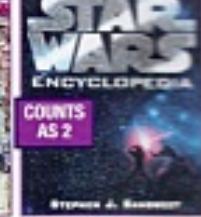
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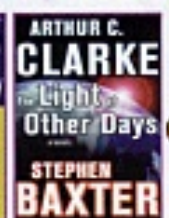
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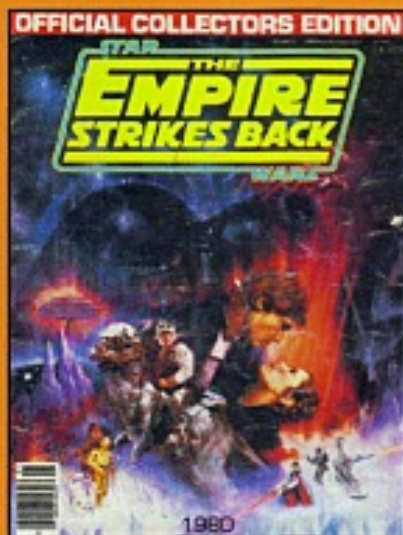
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**ABOUT THE DESIGN:** The design of this special issue was inspired by the original publication *The Empire Strikes Back Official Collectors Edition* (1980, Paradise Press), which celebrated the initial release of Episode V. The volume was designed by George Snow, with editing and production by Michael Marten.



# STAR WARS

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## REBEL RUMBLINGS: OUR READERS WRITE

### DON'T MESS WITH OBI-WAN

I NEVER THOUGHT I'd be writing to a magazine, but now I feel I must. I can't let Obi-Wan Kenobi take the rap for Qui-Gon Jinn's death (Rebel Rumblings, Insider #47). Hey, he already admitted in *Return of the Jedi* that it was his fault Anakin turned to the dark side of the Force. The man has enough guilt on his conscience as it is without being blamed for the death of his Jedi Master.

I think the reason Obi-Wan didn't use his Jedi speed to run and save Qui-Gon from Darth Maul is the same reason Han Solo didn't immediately go into lightspeed to escape the Star Destroyers in *A New Hope*. "Travelin' through hyperspace ain't like dustin' crops, boy—with-out precise calculations, we'd fly right through a star, or bounce too close to a supernova, and that'd end your trip real quick, wouldn't it?"

Those iron pillars in Theed City's power generating room could have rotated at any moment to re-form the laser gates. If Obi-Wan had been running at Jedi speed, he might have run into one of the gates without being able to stop in time. It was dangerous enough for him to just be running at regular human speed.

JEFF STOKER Layton, UT

Why didn't Obi-Wan use Jedi super speed (like when he and Qui-Gon evaded the destroyer droids at the beginning of Episode I) when his Master needed him most? That question—posed in Insider #47 by Rebel Rumblings reader Chris Kaupila and preceded provocatively by the statement, "I believe Qui-Gon could have lived if it wasn't for Obi-Wan"—unleashed the most mail we've received on any single topic since last year's release of Episode I itself. Many readers rushed to defend Obi-Wan's honor, like Stephanie Adams of South Bend, Indiana, who wisely noted, "If it was anyone's fault, it was Darth Maul's," adding she will defend her favorite Star Wars characters "so fast it will make your head spin."

Everybody had a theory about why Obi-Wan didn't make like the Flash on his way through the laser gates, with Jeff's theory about the possibility of getting sliced by a reforming gate frequently cited. The other main theory was that Obi-Wan was simply a lot more tied at that point in the battle than he was battling the droidkas—indeed, some noted that in Terry Brooks' *Episode I* novel, it's said that Jedi rely on "reserves" in the Force and Obi-Wan had already used up most of his reserves by surviving his long fall and jumping back up that in Patricia

Wrede's *Episode I* novel for young readers, "the Sith Lord seemed to cloud Obi-Wan's use of the Force," and in the LucasArts game *Jedi Knight*, your ability to use the Force wears down and you must take time to let it rebuild to full power.

Here are a few more of the many theories that poured into our mailbox:

- Obi-Wan was still a Padawan and unable to maintain his concentration, not taking advantage of the time to meditate as Qui-Gon did.
- As a Padawan, Obi-Wan needed Qui-Gon to lead him in the Force run.
- The Force run might be an ability only Qui-Gon possesses.
- It might take two Jedi to accomplish the Force run together.
- Obi-Wan did not take Qui-Gon's advice to "focus on the here and now."
- As Yoda says, the Force is only for knowledge and defense, never attack.
- Like Han Solo said, "Good against remotes is one thing," but taking on a Sith Lord is another.
- Perhaps Obi-Wan was assuming too much, believing Qui-Gon would never be defeated.
- Maybe the whole duel was already fought at superspeed, and Lucas kindly slowed the whole thing down so we could follow it.
- It was destiny.
- Dramatic effect.

Now, on to another letter that prompted fans to write us at Jedi speed...

### UNSPOILED

I HAVE ONE COMMENT for Martin Proud, who claimed he didn't know of the marriage of Amidala and Anakin (Rebel Rumblings, Insider #47): Duht! If one line hadn't been cut, that would have practically been foretold in the movie. Anakin, whose line is still included in the books, said to Padmé on their first meeting, "I'm going to marry you." I've accidentally seen some real spoilers before, but you guys do nothing to spoil the movies—you only increase the anticipation. Once I get your magazine, I'm fully charged.

SUSAN BARNHARR  
Riverside, OH



I want to congratulate Star Wars Insider on such an awesome magazine! I love the articles, interviews, art, news, and photos! I trust you when you say you will not reveal anything about upcoming movies that Lucasfilm does not want fans to know just yet. You have proven your skill at presenting enough information to satisfy our need to know and whet our appetites without revealing too much.

I would like to know what rock Martin Proud lives under that he didn't know Anakin and Amidala get married and that Amidala is Luke and Leia's mother. I guess I thought every Star Wars fan knows that, just like they know Anakin somehow turns to the dark side and becomes Darth Vader. The question isn't what happens, but how.

For the record, Insider #44 was an excellent issue, especially the interview with John Williams!

RACHEL JONES Rockford, MI

Thanks Rachel and Susan. Poor Martin Proud really took it on the chin for his letter, in which he took issue with our Prequel Update for discussing Anakin & Amidala's upcoming union, comparing the plot turn to Vader's revelation that he was Luke's father and chastising us for spoiling his surprise. Not one letter writer agreed with him—these were two of the least incredulous replies. Still, the Insider takes Martin's feelings seriously and will continue to guard against spoiling your surprises for Episodes II and III. It's just that this one was never meant to be a surprise.

### WANNA RUMBLE?

Write to: REBEL RUMBLINGS, P.O. Box 111000, Aurora, CO 80042, or e-mail RebelRumblings@aol.com. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations. Star Wars Insider is not responsible for any unsolicited material received. This is not the address for Lucasfilm casting. All letters are read, but due to time constraints and the volume of letters received, individual responses are unfortunately not possible. That was never a condition of our agreement, nor was giving Han to this bounty hunter.



## JADE'S CHOIR

WHEN I SAW MARA JADE on the cover of *Insider* #47, I nearly went crazy—and I hadn't even opened the magazine yet! When I did read the article, first I thought, "It's about time they did something on Mara Jade (my favorite character)." Of course, the second thing I thought was, "Why wasn't it me?" In short, I absolutely loved that article! Thank you very much!

MARJORIE HALLORAN  
Sunnyvale, CA

Thank you, Marjorie. The response to our Mara Jade issue was overwhelmingly positive—one reader even called it "just what I'd been waiting for." Here are two more letters that make it all worthwhile.

**INSIDER #47 WAS SIMPLY FANTASTIC!** The articles were, as always, fantastic, but I thought the piece on Mara Jade was one of the best I've seen. I've been a Mara Jade fan since I first read Timothy Zahn's original trilogy, and it was a completely wonderful shock to see Mara Jade peeking out from my mail pile.

The pictures were beyond words! The closest I can come to describe them is phenomenal. The painting of Luke Skywalker and Mara Jade Skywalker (by Duncan Fegredo, from the comic *Union*) was priceless. I lie on my bedroom floor staring at it for 10 minutes, taking in every detail. The pictures in the Mara Jade article were fantastic—Shannon Baksa and the photographer did a great job.

I also enjoyed the infamous *Insider* #44 that people seem to be complaining about. There isn't a part of *Insider* that I don't love! You've expanded *Star Wars* for me in a way I never thought possible, and I look forward to every issue. The day I read a bad *Star Wars Insider* is the day the dark side wins!

KARI HOLMAN Libertyville, IL

**I ABSOLUTELY LOVED** *Insider* #47. Mara Jade is my favorite Expanded Universe character. When I pulled the magazine out of my mailbox, I saw her picture, and the name beside her, and a big smile spread across my face. What a wonderful cover! I have followed Mara Jade ever since *Heir to the Empire*. To finally have her on the cover of the *Insider* was so cool! I also enjoyed the interview with Peter Mayhew—yet another success.

STEPHEN BUTTS Wellston, OH

## WHY CHEWIE?

I HAVE BEEN A STAR WARS FAN  
continued on page 80



Dear Dr. Reynolds

April 1, 2000

We have just come back from our ultimate star wars adventure Road Trip. It is April 1, 8:15 am, we talked to the friendliest man on earth Ranger Callagan, who verified our pictures. The pictures enclosed are the location 'Artoo's Arroyo' located in Artists Palette. We were actually here last weekend, and were standing right by it and didn't know it. We did more research and just ran into a lighter note though, we prepared, but a little too late. My sister, Dad, and I had a great time as star wars archeologists. Our motto was, 'Try not do or do not, there is no try.'

Sincerely,

# ROAD TRIP CONTEST WINNERS!

*Insider* readers rushed to California's Death Valley within days of the publication of *Insider* #48 and its *Star Wars Road Trip* contest to locate "Artoo's Arroyo," the canyon where the original *Star Wars* second unit crew filmed Artoo exploring before his abduction by the Jawas.

Two teams of fans found Artoo's Arroyo (with some help from friendliest-man-on-earth Ranger Charlie Callagan) on April 1, correctly locating the canyon in an area of Death Valley called Artist's Palette, and both teams postmarked their photos to the *Insider* on April 3, 2000. The lucky fans benefited by already living in California, close enough to make it quickly to Death Valley.

First prize (the secret treasure mentioned in *Insider* #48, including a *Star Wars* Celebration Podracing jacket and a bunch of autographed goodies) goes to the daughters-and-dad team of Dana, Jessica, and Art Keithly from Alta Loma, California. In her letter to the *Insider*, Dana (above) said they almost found Artoo's Arroyo the weekend before when they were "standing right by it and didn't know it," but returned

to triumph "as *Star Wars* archaeologists" a week later.

The Keithlys found Artoo's Arroyo just in time, since they were followed within minutes by Joe D'Angelo & Greg Perrine, friends from Sherman Oaks, California, who, as you can see below, dressed for the hunt. The duo also chronicled their journey in a fun, terrific video which, to their credit, acknowledged that someone had been there right before them. For their honesty and incredible *Star Wars* spirit, Joe and Greg are also getting a cut of the *Star Wars Road Trip* booty.

Finally, an honorable mention goes to a Southern California fan who calls himself "Kahunna," who went to Death Valley the following weekend with his friends Pete Genovese and Steve, Amy & Dana Cote. Although they weren't the first to find Artoo's Arroyo, the group did photograph the location from the exact same angle as seen in the movie, and Kahunna

posted the picture (along with the original shot from the movie and other pics from the road trip) on his Web site [www.aumasing.net](http://www.aumasing.net), creating the first fan page dedicated to the *Star Wars Road Trip*, which he called "the best *Star Wars* trip of my life."

But even though the contest has been won, the *Star Wars Road Trip* is only just beginning. The *Insider* has heard from numerous fans planning to make the journey this summer. If you take the trip—to Death Valley or especially to any of the other locations in the article, like Yuma or the Crescent City forests—we want to hear from you. Drop us a letter and send us your pictures, and we'll print as much as we can fit in future editions of *Rebel Rumblings*. Now hit the road!



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# AN EPISODE II REPORT BY DAN MADSEN

## PREQUEL UPDATE

WITH PRE-PRODUCTION IN FULL FORCE AT FOX STUDIOS AUSTRALIA, THE *INSIDER* ONCE AGAIN GOES BEHIND THE SCENES TO BRING YOU THE LATEST ON *STAR WARS: EPISODE II*...

### PRODUCER RICK McCALLUM: "We are now in go mode..."

#### RICK, HAVE YOU STARTED CASTING FOR NEW CHARACTERS YET?

We've been casting for the role of Anakin—that's the only character that we've been looking for at this moment. Obviously, there are other characters to cast, but until we lock into Anakin, which won't be until after April, we've been concentrating on him. [Casting Director] Robin Gurland has been traveling all across the country and working very hard. She has been meeting with me and George weekly with tapes, and we talk every day. George goes through her tapes and he has met with some candidates for the role. That process is continuing.

Of course, we do know that we will have six or eight cast members from Episode I who will be back, including Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Samuel L. Jackson, Ian McDiarmid, and Ahmed Best.

#### ARE YOU CLOSE TO CASTING ANAKIN?

If we had to start shooting tomorrow, we could make a choice and we would be very happy. But I think George is keeping a very open mind, and so are Robin and myself. We're just waiting until the script is totally completed to see who the very best actor will be.

#### I BELIEVE GEORGE HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT LEONARDO DICAPRIO WILL NOT BE PLAYING ANAKIN.

Leo is committed to doing the new Martin Scorsese film. All the rumors and hype about Leo being in the next *Star Wars* film have gotten totally out of hand. You know, Leo is a great fan of *Star Wars*.

#### WILL WE BE SEEING MORE OF SAMUEL L. JACKSON IN EPISODE II THAN THE LAST FILM?

Samuel is a big *Star Wars* fan. We're looking forward to having him back. We love having him in the films. It's great.

#### HOW IS THE SET CONSTRUCTION COMING ALONG?

We just started the process last week. We have almost all of our sets locked in. We have all of our costumes in process. George is working feverishly on rewriting the script and making it better and better. We expect to have that done at the beginning of May. Obviously, we have pages beforehand, but the finished script will be done in May.

Gavin Bocquet and I just flew back to San Francisco and stayed there for two days in "locked door" meetings with George and went through all the sets and locations again. It is all going really well.

We have just completed an incredible construction workshop. It's massive—over 20,000 square feet. Stephen Jones and I have interviewed almost everybody now for a new shooting crew on the set. We have probably hired almost 200 people in the last couple of months. We are now in the "go" mode.

#### ARE THE SETS FOR EPISODE II ON THE SAME SCALE AS THE LAST FILM?

I would say it is the same scale.

#### WHAT IS THE ART DEPARTMENT DOING RIGHT NOW?

They have 32 sets to design and construct. They are working hard and have been for some time.

#### WE KNOW THAT GAVIN BOCQUET AND OTHER BEHIND-THE-SCENES FOLKS ARE BACK. WHO ELSE IS BACK FOR EPISODE II?

[Stunt Coordinator] Nick Gillard, [Costume Designer] Trisha Biggar, [Concept Artist] Iain McCaig, [Prop Master] Ty Teiger and [Set Decorator] Peter Walpole, amongst others.

#### WOULD YOU SAY EPISODE II HAS A DARKER MOOD TO IT?

Yes, it does—because, although we are not in a downward spiral yet, we are certainly headed toward it. One of the great things about Episodes II and III is that we now know what Anakin is like as a young boy. We also know what he becomes by Episode IV. Episodes II and III explore how and why he becomes Darth Vader.

#### WILL THERE BE ANY NEW MAJOR CHARACTERS THAT WILL BE COMPLETELY CG, LIKE JAR JAR WAS?

Yes, there will be.

#### HOW MANY NEW PLANETS WILL WE BE VISITING IN THE NEXT FILM?

More than one and less than 20!

#### WHICH COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN LOCKED IN FOR LOCATION SHOOTING?

Italy, Tunisia, Spain, and possibly Portugal.

#### HAVE YOU MADE A DECISION TO SHOOT EPISODE II 100% DIGITALLY?

Not yet. But it is looking very good. George and I met with the heads of Panavision and Sony last week and saw the second key test of our testing phase. We have a number of things that have to be approved and developed. But, right now, all





Samuel L. Jackson (right) is returning as Mace Windu, but not even that venerable Jedi Master could predict who might be cast as the older Anakin Skywalker.

systems are go and everything is on schedule. It is proving to be a remarkable thing.

**IS THERE ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMOR THAT X-FILES ACTRESS GILLIAN ANDERSON WILL BE PLAYING A JEDI KNIGHT IN THE NEXT FILM?**

Totally false! I think she's a wonderful actress, though.

**STEVEN SPIELBERG RECENTLY SAID THAT INDIANA JONES WOULD BE BACK SOON. CAN YOU COMMENT ON THAT?**

Well, that has nothing to do with me right now because I am concentrated on *Star Wars*. It is really George's and Steven's and Harrison's movie, and they are excited to make it. It's very complicated now. Harrison has his next movies booked, Steven's running a company and making films, and George has Episodes II and III to deal with. It is just getting the three of them together. I think they all want to make another Indy film. It is not age-dependent on Harrison—he gets better and better looking, and stronger and stronger, with each passing year. So we'll see.

**THIS UPDATE IS APPEARING IN OUR SPECIAL EMPIRE STRIKES BACK 20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK?**

I suppose what I liked most is the fact that it was revealed that Luke's father was Darth Vader. It was dramatically bold, and I loved the darkness of it. *Empire* is my favorite of the three original films. I loved everything about it.

**RICK, THANKS FOR YOUR TIME. WE'LL CHAT NEXT ISSUE.**

Great—I should have a lot to tell you! ☺

## PRODUCTION DESIGNER GAVIN BOCQUET: "People will know a lot more about Boba Fett after this film..."

**GAVIN, HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN AUSTRALIA NOW?**

I have been here since the end of January on a full-time basis.

**WHAT IS HAPPENING FROM YOUR END ON EPISODE II?**

We started setting things up as early as last July and August, just some preliminary things we did back in London. There wasn't any definitive script at that point, just some ideas for locations, some vehicles and a couple of repeat sets. We had some small things to sink our teeth into. We also had a fair amount of planning to move the entire operation down to Australia. We did several trips back and forth, and interviewing staff.

**HOW DOES EPISODE II COMPARE IN SCALE, FOR YOU, TO THE LAST FILM?**

That's a bit difficult to put our finger on at the moment, although with the information we've been getting over the last two or three weeks from George, it is becoming a bit more definitive in terms of script and location and set work. We had envisioned it being a little bit less in scale, from our side, but we are counting up the sets and locations this time, and we actually seem to have more than last time. It is hard to know at this time how each of these environments will play out, but it certainly doesn't seem to be any less of scale, visually, than the last film.

**I'VE HEARD THAT GEORGE WANTS THE LOOK OF THIS FILM TO REFLECT MORE OF**

**THE GRITTY LOOK OF THE ORIGINAL STAR WARS AND THAT, FROM A DESIGN ELEMENT, WE WOULD BEGIN TO SEE THE EVOLUTION OF SOME OF THE SHIPS AND SETS TOWARD THE LOOK OF THAT ORIGINAL FILM.**

Yes, I think there are certain elements—whether it is hardware, characters, costumes, or specific pieces of furniture—that have a lot more connection to images and ideas that people have seen in Episodes IV through VI. It could come down to very small pieces of costumes, or very specific pieces of furniture or details in sets. You'll probably see it in certain types of ship designs from Doug Chiang and the concept group. It is certainly not overplayed—it could be quite subtle. Fans who have knowledge of that will probably see where we place them.

Apart from Tatooine and Coruscant, there wasn't too much initial connection in Episode I to the other films. I think George was quite happy with that on Episode I, but on Episodes II and III, we're getting closer and closer to the storyline in *A New Hope*, as well as visually closer.

**RICK HAS SAID THAT WE'LL BE VISITING SOME NEW PLANETS IN THIS FILM. ARE YOU IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING SOME DESIGNS FOR THE LOOK OF THESE NEW PLANETS?**

Yes. As with the designs of other planets before, there will be elements completely new and other-worldly mixed with images and visual ideas from things in the past we may be familiar with. There was even more of the new,





Ben Burtt and Natalie Portman (foreground) will both return in Episode II—and so will concept designer Rick McCallum, seen here at night during their cameo on Naboo.

## PREQUEL UPDATE EXTRA: Writer Jonathan Hale Joins Episode II Team.

With principal photography of Episode II set to start this summer, George Lucas took a key step toward completion of the still-untitled film's screenplay by inviting screenwriter Jonathan Hale, a veteran of Lucas' *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*, to collaborate on the script's final draft.

As the *Insider* went to press, Lucasfilm announced that Lucas had "enlisted the aid" of Hales to "refine the script" following "several" initial drafts by Lucas that "set the stage for the action, events, and characters to be seen in the movie." The process mirrors Lucas' approach to *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, when Lucas brought in writer Lawrence Kasdan to hone his vision as shooting approached. (See Kasdan's interview on page 32 for details.)

Hales—who joins an exclusive club of *Star Wars* writers including Lucas, Kasdan, and Leigh Brackett—already has a long and successful history of collaboration with Lucasfilm, having written or co-written several episodes of the award-winning *Young Indy* TV series. Hales also authored the scripts for the feature-length TV-movies *Young Indiana Jones and the Scandal of 1920*, *Young Indiana Jones and the Curse of the Jockal*, and *Young Indiana Jones: Tales of Innocence*. For fans eager to get an early sample of Hales' style, *Tales of Innocence* is one of the *Young Indy* adventures recently released on home video (*Insider* #46).

*Star Wars: Episode II* is scheduled for release in May, 2002.

otherworldly look in the conceptual stage for this film, but it seems that environment has been moved to Episode III. But now Naboo is a known environment, whereas in Episode I it wasn't.

We will be visiting Tatooine, Coruscant, and Naboo again in Episode II—and then there are two or three new environments we will be visiting. One is primarily digital like the Gungan City (not in style but in how we produce the images), and the other two are a bit up for grabs at the moment until we see what is actually happening in these scenes that take place in these worlds. But the conversations I have had with Doug over the last three or four weeks have allowed us to turn around a very fast-paced focus pre-production period because we are starting to get the serious information we need.

### HOW DOES THIS PRE-PRODUCTION TIME COMPARE TO EPISODE I? IS THERE MORE TO DO IN LESS AMOUNT OF TIME?

We are on a similar schedule because of the time of year we are shooting. You can compare the two. On the other hand, we are probably getting the information later than we did the last time, but then we also have environments we already know a lot about which had to be developed a great deal last time. So the initial conceptual work on Episode I needed to go back to "base camp," so to speak, whereas on this one we feel, despite the slightly delayed information gathering, there is a sort of comfort level with the fact we have all worked together before, and we understand the major environments of *Star Wars*, how we work, how George works, and how we put all of these things together.

Half of our environments we have knowledge of. There might be different rooms or

spaces in these environments, but a lot of the initial conceptualizing is done. So on the one hand, we're getting the information later, which makes us work a little bit faster, and we're in a new country which also makes it a little bit more hectic. But then there is an awful lot of familiarity with the people we're working with and what we're doing.

### ONE CHARACTER THAT FANS ARE VERY EAGER TO SEE RETURN IN THE NEXT FILM IS BOBA FETT. HAVE YOU DESIGNED FETT'S NEW LOOK YET?

Yes. Most of the character designs and costumes have evolved from Doug's group, and the concept group, but we're already moving into looking at Boba Fett's ship and slight derivations of that, as well as Fett's apartment, and other environments that Fett exists in. It's very interesting going back to a character that is such a favorite. I think people will know a lot more about Boba Fett after this film.

### WHAT ARE YOUR DAYS LIKE NOW?

Well, every day is really quite different. In the last four or five weeks, we've begun to get the information that we really need to get working on this end. We have to be in a preliminary construction mode. We are now just starting to build one or two sets here. It's a real conveyor belt of information passing from conceptualizing, to the more constructive set design, to the drawing of those sets, to the building. That conveyor belt has to keep moving pretty fast now for the next four or five months.

As Rick has told you, we go off to Italy and Tunisia to scout for locations to revisit those planets they represent. In terms of possibly going back to Mos Espa, the street is still there, and we may be visiting the old homestead as



## PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR STEPHEN JONES

### "We have outgrown this studio already..."

well. But as far as my day now is concerned, it really starts at about 7 a.m. I then have about 20 people asking me questions throughout the day and I go home at 8 p.m. At the moment, I am basically in my office in the art department helping get the ideas out. Gradually, as we start building, my day will become much more of me visiting the sets and seeing things actually being built, and making adjustments and decisions. At the moment, I am office-bound.

#### WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE "LOOK" OF THIS FILM AS DARKER?

Yes—not in terms of lighting, but generally speaking, I would say that is true. The new environments are a little bit more forbidding. It's kind of hard to say without having read the script and knowing how these environments will play on screen. But everyone can gather from the rough storyline we've been told that this will be on the darker side. How much of that leads into Episode III, only George knows. Making these films is different from making other films in terms of how script information is passed among George, Doug, Rick, and myself. It's a very non-linear approach. We get bits and pieces that you start putting together like a jigsaw puzzle.

#### ISN'T THIS THE WAY YOU WORKED ON EPISODE I?

Yes, it is. I think George likes to work in that way—a collage of information. He likes working on a sequence that seems relevant at that moment. That's very different from other kinds of filmmaking, where the very first thing you have is the script, but this integrally works on the visuals as well. George puts it together with visual ideas in the script which, from my point of view, is an interesting and fun way to work. I think George likes to work this way. It gives him a flexibility to see how things are developing and change things.

#### GAVIN, WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING IN BETWEEN EPISODES I AND II?

I worked on the upcoming film *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*. ILM is also doing most of the animation work on it. We've all got our fingers crossed—it is a very different and unusual project. If you remember the TV show, it was appealing to both kids and adults—it was satirical almost. I think they kept that quality in the film. It hits the simple humor but it also hits the slightly satirical humor. The difficulty is that you've got to get people into the theater to watch a movie about a moose and a squirrel! ☉

#### STEPHEN, THIS IS YOUR FIRST STAR WARS FILM. WHAT DID YOU WORK ON BEFORE, AND HOW DOES IT FEEL COMING ONBOARD FOR EPISODE II?

I've been living in Australia for a number of years, although I am originally from England. I have been working in production and just finished a film called *Red Planet* for Warner Brothers. It was during that time that Rick was looking for facilities for Episode II, and I met up with him. Just as I was about to finish *Red Planet* he rang me up and said, "Would you like to become involved with Episode II?" Of course, I was thrilled.

Before coming to work on his film, there were different perceptions about how *Star Wars* would be filmed. People I have spoken to were quite surprised by the fact it is a reasonably short shooting schedule from other films, but a lot of work is done in post-production. I am really pleased with what a great group of people are working on this film—everyone is easy to get along with and we are putting together a good team to continue that in both London and here in Australia.

#### WHAT DOES A PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR DO?

When a production comes from overseas to Sydney or London or wherever, they are always looking for a person who can help be a liaison with the local working conditions and advise them as to which people they might want working on the project. Basically, along with Rick, I am responsible for the budgetary and logistical side of the project. We pull the entire project together, sort out the travel accommodations, keep an eye on the budget, and make sure we're not wasting any of it. I negotiate the deals with the crew and keep an eye on things from a local point of view, too. I will be finished within four to eight weeks after shooting.

#### HOW DOES EPISODE II COMPARE TO OTHER FILMS YOU'VE WORKED ON?

There is a much bigger emphasis on the art department than on other projects, and less of the huge actors' entourages that other projects might have. People in our film won't be surrounding themselves with the periphery of staff that many films have. The sets and the quality of the costuming and art department are of a very high standard, and it is clear to me that the money goes on the screen.

#### WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

When you have offices in San Francisco, London, Tunisia, Italy, and here in Australia, it is

difficult coordinating with the different time zones. Keeping the lines of communication open is probably the most difficult.

#### HOW MANY LOCAL AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE DO YOU EXPECT TO HIRE FOR THIS FILM?

We could end up with a construction staff of 150, a shooting crew of 80, and a cast in the hundreds. Wherever possible, we are trying to use Australian people to work on the project.

#### IS THERE A BUZZ OF EXCITEMENT THERE ABOUT EPISODE II?

Oh, yes. People are very excited on a professional level—to get an opportunity to work on a project of this nature with this pedigree, which is great for us because there is a level of enthusiasm and excitement that helps make this film even better.

#### WHAT IS YOUR TYPICAL WORKDAY LIKE?

At the moment, I am starting to schedule the film based on a visual effects breakdown. I am putting the script into a computer-scheduling program and then we'll sit down and put a rough schedule together.

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE SETS?

We're in the design stage right now where they make these little architectural models made out of foam core. Once those are approved, they go off to the draftsman where they work them up into working drawings for the carpenters to actually build the sets. I expect we'll have our first set completed in about six weeks. We are using all of the Fox Studios stages and more. We are right now looking for more space. We have outgrown this studio already. We will probably end up using the construction workshop as a stage before we are finished.

#### WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THIS PROJECT?

Working with a group of people who have established such a high quality of excellence. There is the potential of doing some groundbreaking work by filming this on high disk, too. Digital video could be the wave of the future. When you combine those things together with the heritage of the *Star Wars* films, it makes for a great project to be working on.

#### ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN SHARE WITH US?

No, we're just gearing up. The art department is very busy and we will be doing some location scouting shortly. Then we come back and head into the final preparation for shooting. Shooting is scheduled to begin June 29<sup>th</sup>! ☉



## HAN SOLO GETS HIS REWARD

## HARRISON FORD

HONORED BY THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE



**HARRISON FORD** received the American Film Institute's prestigious **Life Achievement Award** this February, celebrating the career of an actor whose impact on cinema history goes far beyond his star-making roles as Han Solo and Indiana Jones.

George Lucas—who put Ford in three *Star Wars* episodes, three Indy movies, and two *American Graffiti*s—presented Ford the award, along with Indy director Steven Spielberg. Ford, who jokingly blamed Lucas “for this whole mess” of a career, said in his speech, “Much of what I get credit for here tonight is the result of collaboration with some of the best minds and kindest hearts in our business.”

After enduring a night of glowing tributes from Lucas, Spielberg, Carrie Fisher, director Mike Nichols (*Working Girl*), Brad

Pitt (*The Devil's Own*), Anne Archer (*Patriot Games*, *Clear and Present Danger*), and many other colleagues, the notoriously shy Ford said, “This evening has been more scary, more fun, more touching than I could have imagined. You’ve made me laugh, and I’m going to get the hell out of here before you make me cry.”

#### KESSEL RUNNING: GEORGE LUCAS HITS THE RACE TRACK

LOOK OUT SEBULBA—the inventor of Podracing is on your slimy Dug tail.

George Lucas, whose need

for speed has surfaced in films from *American Graffiti* to *The Phantom Menace*, was scheduled to join 14 other celebrity drivers for the 24th Annual Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race on April 15 in Long Beach, California. The 10-lap race is a charity fundraiser to benefit children's hospitals in Southern California.

Ashley Judd, John Elway, and Christian Slater were among the stars slated to compete with Lucas along a 1.97-mile Grand Prix street circuit. We'll have full coverage of this real-life trench run in the next issue of *Star Wars Insider*.

#### LUCASBOOKS UNLOCKS THE SEVENTH TOWER

“I HOPE THAT THE ADVENTURE THAT UNFOLDS in *The Seventh Tower* series will take read-

ers on a new journey of the mind,” says George Lucas, whose LucasBooks imprint will join forces with publisher Scholastic (*Harry Potter*, *Animorphs*) to launch *The Seventh Tower*, an epic fantasy series for readers ages 8-12 this summer.

Written by acclaimed Australian author Garth Nix (*Sabriel*, *Shade's Children*), *The Seventh Tower* tells the story of Tal, resident of a dark mountaintop fortress completely cut off from the outside world, following his frightening fall from the tower and into an unknown future.

The first book in the series, *The Fall* (\$4.99), is scheduled for release June 5, with another new book released every three months. For more information on the new



adventure, check out [www.theseventhtower.com](http://www.theseventhtower.com).

## ELECTRONIC LABYRINTH GETS ELECTRONIC SCREENING

GEORGE LUCAS' ACCLAIMED 15-minute student film *Electronic Labyrinth: THX 1138: 4EB*, which the young director made in 1967 at USC's School of Cinema-Television and re-made into his first feature three years later, is one of over 100 USC student films now available online at Atom Films ([www.atomfilms.com](http://www.atomfilms.com)). The Web site, which specializes in short films, has struck an exclusive agreement with USC to distribute the films on the Web through August, 2001.

## MULTI-PLAYER STAR WARS UNIVERSE TO GO ONLINE

LUCASARTS IS JOINING FORCES with two leading multimedia companies to create the first-ever massively multi-player online *Star Wars* game. The game is currently under development by Verant Interactive, creators of the popular online game *Everquest*. It will be distributed to retail stores by LucasArts and available for play exclusively online at Sony Online Entertainment's [www.station.sony.com](http://www.station.sony.com), with the

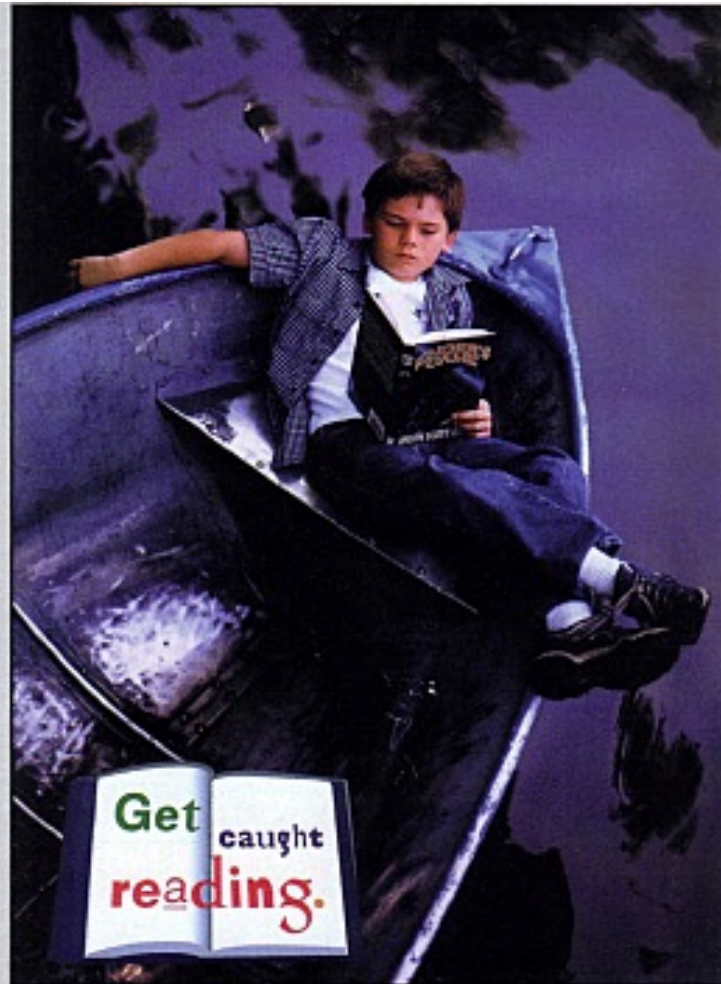
potential for thousands of players to create characters and adventures simultaneously. We'll have more information as the game heads toward its late-2001 release date.

## JEFFREY BOAM 1949-2000

SCREENWRITER JEFFREY BOAM, who wrote Lucasfilm's 1989 blockbuster *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, died of heart failure related to a rare lung disease early this year.

Boam ruled the box-office in 1989, when in addition to *Last Crusade* he also wrote another major hit, *Lethal Weapon 2*. Three years later, he penned the story to *Lethal Weapon 3*. Among Boam's other screenplays are *Innerspace*, *The Last Boys*, *The Phantom*, *The Dead Zone*, *Funny Farm*, and *Straight Time*. In addition, Boam was a co-creator and co-producer of the much-loved cult-classic TV series *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.*

Boam was also the author of the latest draft of a possible fourth *Indiana Jones* movie. The script had met with early approval from George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and Harrison Ford. "George and Steven would like to do it at some point," Lucasfilm told *The Hollywood Reporter* after Boam's death. ☐



## JAKE LLOYD GETS CAUGHT READING

WHO'S THAT YOUNG JEDI reading Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*? It's Jake Lloyd, of course, lending a hand to the Association of American Publishers' campaign to encourage reading among young people. Dubbed "Get Caught Reading," the program has also enlisted John Lithgow (Yoda in the *Empire Strikes Back* radio drama) and even Donald Duck to promote the pleasures of books.

## STAR SIGHTINGS

Voice of the Jedi: **LIAM NEESON** (Qui-Gon Jinn) is the new narrator of the popular Irish musical *Riverdance*, running at Broadway's Gershwin Theater through June 25. But don't expect to see the Jedi in person—the production uses a tape recording of Neeson's voice during each performance. ... Neeson was also the narrator for the PBS documentary "The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization."

The write stuff: **CARRIE FISHER** (Princess Leia) and Elaine Pope are writing a screenplay based on Sophia Kinsella's romantic/comic novel *The Secret*

*Dream World of a Shopaholic* for producer Jerry Bruckheimer (*Armageddon*). ... Bruckheimer is also producing the historical epic *Pearl Harbor*, with special effects by ILM. ... Brothers **JIM & KEN WHEAT** (who wrote and directed the ABC movie *Ewoks: The Battle for Endor*) co-wrote the recent sci-fi hit *Pitch Black* with director David Twohy. ...

Episode I stars onscreen: **SAMUEL L. JACKSON** (Mace Windu) stars in the drama *The Caveman's Valentine* for his Eve's Bayou director Kasi Lemmons. ... **PERNILLA AUGUST** (Shmi Skywalker) stars in the Swedish fable *The Glassblower's Children*. ... **FRANK OZ** (Yoda) has lined up

an impressive cast for his upcoming thriller *The Score*; Oz will direct Godfathers Robert DeNiro and Marlon Brando. ...

Almost there: **HARRISON FORD** (Han Solo) is rumored to be this close to reprising his popular Jack Ryan character for a third go-round in the action movie series based on Tom Clancy's books. ... **TREAT WILLIAMS** (an uncredited extra in *The Empire Strikes Back*'s Hoth scenes) stars in the CBS television drama pilot *Hopewell*. ...

Behind the Scenes: *Star Wars* saga score composer **JOHN WILLIAMS**' latest project is the Mel Gibson war epic *The Patriot*. ... Episode I & II director of pho-

tography **DAVID TATTERSALL** lenses the thriller *The Vertical Limit* for *GoldenEye* director Martin Campbell. ... **DAVID DOZORETZ** (a previzualization artist on Episode I) is at work on the **EWAN MCGREGOR** musical *Moulin Rouge*. ... *Return of the Jedi* co-costume designer **AGGIE GUERARD RODGERS** wove together the costumes for *The Hurricane*. ...

Kudos: As this issue went to press, *Insider* interviewee **JAMES EARL JONES** (Darth Vader's voice) was nominated for a Daytime Emmy Award for his performance in the Showtime children's special "Summer's End." Congratulations, Mr. Jones! ☐



# — EPISODE V — THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

WHY EMPIRE ROCKS OUR WORLD - 20 YEARS AND GOING STRONG

**IT IS A DARK TIME FOR THE REBELLION.** The first words tell the whole story. In the fifth episode of the *Star Wars* saga, the Empire struck back with ferocity and vengeance, crushing the Rebellion through both brute force and dark Force—freezing the heroic Han Solo in carbonite, cuffing the mighty Chewbacca, and even slicing off the hand of Luke Skywalker in an unrelenting lightsaber attack.

From Super Star Destroyers to gigantic All Terrain Armored Transports, unleashing thousands upon thousands of probe droids and a menacing band of deadly bounty hunters, every weapon in the Imperial arsenal was deployed—and each in its own way was successful. By the end of the film, the heroes were all but broken, the Rebellion was weakened, and the audience left dazed: Um, we wondered, did Darth Vader really say he was Luke Skywalker's father?

Oh, he said it all right—and he meant it. But it's hard to blame fans for wondering what hit us. After all, now that it's been 20 years, nearly every nuance of *The Empire Strikes Back* has seeped into popular consciousness: the now-infamous "I am your father" revelation; John Williams' foreboding "Imperial March" music; Yoda's training; the striking visage of Boba Fett.

Yet when this "*Star Wars* 2" first hit the streets, we didn't quite realize what we were in for. I mean, we knew it was going to be awesome—we waited three years to find out what was in store for Luke, Leia, Han, and Chewie, and when *Empire* was released on May 21, 1980, we waited in line for hours. But what we didn't realize was that *The Empire Strikes Back* would be so much more than a sequel—indeed, that it would be, in some ways, so much more than *Star Wars* itself.

Because rather than merely rehashing the characters, planets, and adventures of the first *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* expanded

and deepened the story, moving established characters in surprising new directions while also introducing a wide range of exciting new ones. Our heroes were dealt impossible odds, faced with surprising revelations, and found themselves in harsh and illusory new worlds—in fact, the only location in *Empire* that we had seen before was space itself, and even there we encountered new dangers.

Between the careening asteroids in space, the bitter cold on Hoth, and the murky unease of Dagobah, only the glistening façade of Cloud City offered respite—until that place revealed itself as the worst site of betrayal, torture, and a dangerous teeter on the edge of the dark side.

So with all this darkness, how come so many *Star Wars* fans say *The Empire Strikes Back* is their favorite movie in the series? And more to the point, how can a movie where the bad guys win and the heroes get hosed be so much fun to watch?

Well, of course, the answers are myriad, and they all stem from the story and characters George Lucas created. It helps that *The Empire Strikes Back* is also first-rate filmmaking, beginning with the tight, vibrant screenplay by Leigh Brackett and Lawrence Kasdan, and the confident, elegant direction of Irvin Kershner—ably aided by Paul Hirsch's crisp editing, Peter Suschitzky's organic cinematography, John Williams' driving orchestral score, and of course, ILM's still-breathtaking visual effects. The result is at once the grittiest and the most

contemplative of all four *Star Wars* films. Indeed, it's telling that when the Special Edition rolled around in 1997, *Empire* was barely changed.

But of course, Episode V was more than a collection of technically impressive feats. The movie had a heart and a soul, and in 1980, its overwhelming boldness and unexpected depth left no doubt that the *Star Wars* saga was here to stay. Faced with following up the most popular movie of all time, *The Empire Strikes Back* simply would not settle for second-best.

While *Star Wars* had climaxed with a giant battle scene, *Empire* instead began with the big battle—the astounding Hoth assault that remains one of the most memorable and original sequences in film history—and moved on from there. Instead, *Empire* ended with a lightsaber duel that easily outlasted and outmaneuvered the Vader-Kenobi match in *A New Hope* and also resonated on a deeper emotional level when Vader revealed his identity as Anakin Skywalker. By ending on a cliffhanger—and with the bad guys on top—the movie left many wanting still more.

That's also because, on the way to that cliffhanger, *The Empire Strikes Back* never let up: there was the Millennium Falcon at its most graceful, soaring through the asteroid field—and ultimately into and out of the space slug; the spiritual passages of Luke's training on the mysterious swamp planet; the introduction of four of the saga's most important and enduring characters—Yoda, Lando Calrissian, Boba Fett, and (briefly) the Emperor—as well as a host of unforgettable supporting players, from Lobot, Dengar, and Pelt, to wampa, tauntaun, and mynock.

Our returning champions all shine in new ways, too. We knew Leia, for instance, was a





leader of the Rebellion, but in the Battle of Hoth, we finally got to see her in command. Her romance with Han (enlivened by some of the film's sharpest dialogue) also seemed to settle, though not definitively, the question of whether Han or Luke would win the heart of the princess—and believe me, there was a time when that was a subject of much schoolyard debate. We also saw immediately how close and loyal Han had become to Luke—his determination to find the kid lost in the snow is palpable and intense, as when he snaps at the deck officer, “Then I’ll see you in hell!”

Luke himself is put to the test like never before: the starry-eyed Skywalker is waylaid by a wampa, shot down by an AT-AT, completely fooled by Yoda, overpowered by Darth Vader, and sucker-punched with the news that his old man is pure evil. But it's only after these trials that the farmboy will really begin to develop the strength he needs to redeem his father.

Vader, too, is in top form. Choking Imperial officers left and right, not to mention having Han tortured and chopping off his own son's hand, Darth Vader is so mean in this movie that it's hard to believe this is the same

dude who used to be so tight with Jar Jar Binks. Yet in some moments, Kershner gives us a glimpse of Vader's inner struggle, like in his haunting opening shot of the Sith Lord, his back to the camera, gazing into space, isolated, searching.

In *Empire* we also get to see, for an instant, the first appearance of Vader out of his helmet, sitting in that supercool meditation chamber. It is the first hint that he is human, and a foreshadowing of the truth to come.

A few other cool things I love about *The Empire Strikes Back*: It's the only time we get to see Han Solo wield a lightsaber; the Ugnaughts playing catch with C-3PO's head; Lando's winning smile, dashing outfits, and constant attempts to pick up on Leia—as though he might actually score with her in the 20 minutes before he hands her over to the Empire; the way Han bickers with a droid helping him repair the Falcon; the way Luke chooses to let go rather than join Vader; how it inspired an at-the-time-awesome Atari 2600 game; the part when Leia calls Han “laser brain” and Han calls Chewie “fuzzball”; Luke and Leia's kiss—’nuff said; Chewie's loyalty and love, his cries making

Han's descent into the carbon freezing chamber all the more moving; everything Yoda says; every move Lobot makes; and the moment when Vader volunteers, “The Force is with you, young Skywalker, but you are not a Jedi yet!”—and then proves it.

I'm sure everybody reading this has their own feelings about what makes *The Empire Strikes Back* so special. Since I was eight years old when I saw it in 1980, the movie—and the memories of waiting in line for hours for it, seeing it time after time, playing with the action figures, and spending hours with my friends wondering whether Darth Vader could really be Luke's father—will always be with me. That's why I'm especially honored to introduce this special issue celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fifth episode of the Star Wars saga. We've devoted almost the entire issue, including our regular columns, to *The Empire Strikes Back*, and we recommend you read it with the movie's soundtrack blaring.

So read on—but we warned: if once you start down this dark path, forever will it dominate your destiny. In other words, full steam ahead. ☉

—Scott Chernoff



# trail of the **BOUNTY** **HUNTERS**

**ON THE HUNT FOR THE ELUSIVE AND INVENTIVE SCUM OF THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** BY SCOTT CHERNOFF, WITH RICH HANDLEY

**"BOUNTY HUNTERS. WE DON'T NEED THAT SCUM."**

Oh, yes we do. Admiral Piett's disdainful dismissal marked the six new characters gathered by Darth Vader in *The Empire Strikes Back* as the riff-raff of the galaxy, a fistful of fierce fighters with allegiances to neither the Empire nor the Rebellion, but only to themselves. They were the bounty hunters, the coolest collection of criminals ever introduced in outer space.



**D**engar—a battle-scarred thug with a surly scowl. Zuckuss—his huge insect eyes deflecting attention from well-concealed weaponry. Boba Fett—the eye-catching rogue who somehow knows Darth Vader. Bossk—reptilian and angry. 4-LOM and IG-88—the first evil droids glimpsed in the saga, programmed to search and destroy. All in all, these guys looked a lot harder to shake than Greedo.

Yet just as quickly as we met them, they vanished without a trace, with only Boba Fett triumphantly showcased in *Return of the Jedi*.

Fittingly, the actor inside the Boba Fett costume, Jeremy Bulloch, has been the most visible of the actors who portrayed *Empire's* bounty hunters. While his star has steadily risen, the identities of the remaining actors have been as shrouded in mystery as the characters themselves.

When the *Insider* embarked on a search to find the previously-credited performers behind the bounty hunters for this special *Empire Strikes Back* anniversary issue, we knew it would be tough. What we didn't realize was that the quest would only be fulfilled through





the combined efforts of Insider readers and reporters, Lucasfilm archivists, *Star Wars* saga sound designer Ben Burtt, Empire producer Gary Kurtz, and even the ultimate bounty hunter himself—Jeremy Bulloch, who provided crucial assistance in tracking down some of his colleagues.

When the search began, all we had to go on was what Lucasfilm's Steve Sansweet and librarian Jo Donaldson gleaned from an original Empire call sheet. Other than Boba Fett, the call sheet didn't have specific character names for the bounty hunters; instead, they were called Lobster Head, Lizard Head, Human, and Insect Head—which we interpreted as, respectively, Zuckuss, Bossk, Dengar, and 4-LOM. With no listing for an IG-88 actor, we figured there was nobody inside the droid's tall, thin frame.

Once we had a few

actors' names—Cathy Munro for Zuckuss, Moray Bush for Dengar, and Chris Parsons for 4-LOM—we enlisted the help of Jeremy Bulloch, who agreed to join the hunt. Using his connections in the British acting world, Jeremy immediately tracked down Chris Parsons, and using another call sheet, he identified the actor behind Bossk as Alan Harris.

We were also able to find, for the first time ever, the voice of Boba Fett, Jason Wingreen. That search was aided by Insider contributor Rich Handley, Elise Cronin & Alan Vasquez of Lucasfilm's legal department, and the actor's proud great nephew Dan Stillman. But the crucial moment came when Ben Burtt and Lucasfilm archivist Sandra Groom located, high on a shelf, original tapes, as well as a contract and record of payment to Wingreen, finally confirming his role in the saga.

"I had fun," super-sleuth Burtt said. "It's always fun to review the different voices and many takes of dialogue which eventually end

up getting edited down to one specific and ultimately 'classic' reading of the line. It was an audio reunion of sorts."

Sadly, after an extensive search, we learned of the passing of Moray Bush, whose Dengar made such an impression on fans that he is among the most requested interviews in Insider history. It was such a request, from a reader named Warren Johnson, who suggested that Bush was a friend of Darth Vader actor David Prowse, that led to Prowse confirming Bush's passing.

Remaining at large is Zuckuss across Cathy Munro, for whom we have no information, and the person who performed IG-88. Don't think we didn't look. If you're out there, Cathy and IG, drop us a line! Still, our bounty hunter search introduces three new faces to the Empire pantheon, and identifies two more new names. After 20 years, time has finally caught up with the bounty hunters of *The Empire Strikes Back*. —Scott Chernoff

## BOBA FETT: Jeremy Bulloch

Even standing amid the intimidating group of menacing bounty hunters gathered on Darth Vader's Super Star Destroyer, Boba Fett stood out from the pack. It wasn't just that Vader singled him out for a special warning—"No disintegrations." The striking costume, designed by Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston, obviously made an impact, but there was something more mysterious about Fett, something in the way he moved.

"I think the secret to playing Boba Fett—if you can say I played it—is the less you do, the better," said Jeremy Bulloch, the actor who indeed did play the galaxy's most notorious free agent in *The Empire Strikes Back* and again in *Return of the Jedi*. "There is no point in Boba Fett waving his gun around and saying, 'Look at me.' He was very cool, and he didn't move much. I thought of Boba Fett as Clint Eastwood in a suit of armor."

But while Bulloch is quick to give the suit credit for the character's popularity, it's clear from listening to him speak that he put a lot of thought into what could have been a throw-away character but ended up becoming one of the *Star Wars* saga's most enduring—and unexpected—icons.

"Number one, he has respect from people because he captured Han Solo," Bulloch told the Insider. "He answers Darth Vader back, and he also has a fantastic costume—and I was lucky because I fit the suit."

Yes, Bulloch clinched the part in Empire for precisely that reason. He

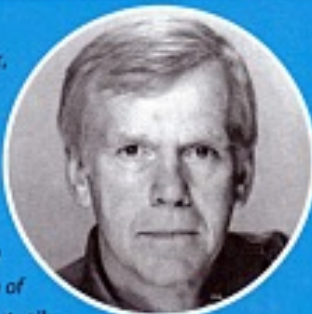
was invited to audition by his half-brother, Empire associate producer Robert Watts. "He said, 'Come see if you fit one of the suits,'" Bulloch recalled. "They were looking for people to fit the costume. Who knows—it could have been a stunt man playing it."

But it couldn't, really—and that's why Bulloch was asked to reprise the role in *Return of the Jedi*. Over the years, Boba Fett (who was actually introduced prior to Empire in a cartoon made for 1978's "Star Wars Holiday Special") became so popular among *Star Wars* fans that he was not only given a prominent afterlife in the expanded universe of comics and novels, but also added to the *Star Wars* Special Edition and given more screen time in the Special Edition of *Jedi*, where he was played by ILM droid operators Don Bies and Nelson Hall. (ILM's Mark Austin played him for *A New Hope*.)

"They were trying to make him a ladies man," Bulloch said of the new footage. "If it had been me, I would have said, 'Can I perhaps grab her by the chin and push her away?' Because he becomes vulnerable. I don't think he would let his guard down. But I was really pleased with the re-release because they put Boba Fett in *Star Wars* as well, just as a presence."

As with Fett's insertion into *A New Hope*, the character's announced appearance in *Star Wars: Episode II* (due in 2002) speaks to the vast following Boba Fett captured, seemingly without trying. The actor said the character's popularity is due largely to all the questions that never get answered during his brief time on screen. "People ask, 'What's that beneath the kneepad? What about those little things in your pockets?' There's so much gadgetry to him—he's a walking arsenal, really."

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# BOBA FETT: Jeremy Bulloch



Carrying that arsenal around the Empire set was not easy, the actor recalled. "The costume was very hot, because it was extremely heavy," he said. "And in the carbon freezing chamber, there was steam coming up out of the floor. I was next to David Prowse, and our helmets were taken off every three minutes because it was so hot. We were dripping."

The legendary helmet posed other prob-

lems, too. "I remember nearly trodding on Darth Vader's cape, coming down the steps into the carbon freezing chamber, because I could hardly see," Bulloch said. "I trod on one of the guys playing an Ugnaught. I trod on his foot, and there was a yelp—I thought it was a real Ugnaught noise. The biggest challenge was to not fall over, because I was a bit top-heavy with the jet pack."

Still, despite the difficulties, Bulloch managed to stay true to his vision of Fett as High Plains Drifter. "Occasionally, I would make a movement, but a little one, because the less you do, the stronger the character is," he explained. "So I would just stand with my hip one way, and I'd cradle the gun a certain way. He's aware that something could happen any time, so he's quick with the gun. It's ready cocked. He knows exactly what's going on behind him. He may be

moving slowly, but he's deadly when it comes to that sudden movement."

During Bulloch's four weeks on the Empire set, the actor was also pressed into service for the Empire itself. "One day, I was sitting around in the Boba Fett outfit, and I was asked if I would mind playing this Imperial officer, because there was nobody to play the part. I went into wardrobe, got dressed in an Imperial Officer's uniform, and played this part who now has a name in the Decipher card game, Lieutenant Sheckil It was in the scene in Cloud City where Princess Leia says 'Luke, it's a trap'—I drag her away. Moments earlier, you see me as Boba Fett shooting at Mark Hamill."

In the years since Jedi, Bulloch has stayed connected with Fett and his fans by becoming one of the most active and in-demand Star Wars stars at fan conventions worldwide. "The

# VOICE OF BOBA FETT: Jason Wingreen

"He's no good to me dead."



**W**ith barely any lines, and only a few minutes of screen time, Boba Fett became one of the most popular characters in Star Wars history. For years, convention-goers have enjoyed appearances by actor Jeremy Bulloch, who gave life to Fett's famous armor, but the identity of the man who spoke those words has remained unknown. Until now. Jason Wingreen, veteran actor of stage and screen, has been confirmed

by the *Insider* as the voice of Boba Fett in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Airplane! fans will recognize Wingreen as Dr. Brody of the Mayo Clinic, but he's best known as Archie Bunker's bartender. A native New Yorker, raised in the Howard Beach area of Queens, Wingreen was a natural for the role of Harry Snowden, whom he portrayed for three seasons of *All in the Family* and four seasons of its continuation, *Archie Bunker's Place*. "Before I came out to Hollywood," Wingreen told the *Insider*, "I was in a Broadway play called *Fragile Fox*, and I played a character named Private Snowden, so

I figured after the war, Snowden became a bartender!"

The actor was amazed to learn how popular his Empire work has become with fans—especially since he recorded Fett's dialogue in only 20 minutes. "My agent called me and said to go over to the recording studio, where I met Gary Kurtz and Irvin Kershner," he recalled. "Normally, you see the face of an actor you're dubbing, so you have to lip-synch. But that was no problem here—I could say the lines at any time. I got in position, they ran the film a few times, and I said the lines. Kershner came out and made a suggestion or two and went back in the control room, I did it again, and I was finished."

Wingreen suspects he got the job because they remembered him from an audition for the voice of Yoda. "I was up for it right up to the very end," he said. When Lucas wooed Frank Oz to the role, Wingreen accepted Fett's voice instead. But since the film was produced under a British contract and he earned no royalties, Wingreen did not make much money off Fett—until Underoos unveiled its line of Empire underwear. "The advertising agency doing the campaign decided they wanted the actor who did the voice to do the promotion," he said, "and the residuals for the commercial were about 20 times what I made doing Fett on film!"

Wingreen, 80, has since retired after a 54-year career and is living comfortably in Studio City, California. "I decided when I was 75 that I'd had enough," he said. "My wife was ill, and after she died, I said, 'I don't need to get up at 4:30 in the morning and trip over the cables anymore.'" His final acting jobs were an episode of *Seinfeld* called "The Opera" and a two-hour episode of *In the Heat of the Night* that reunited him with *All in the Family*'s Carroll O'Connor one last time. Other roles he recalls fondly include the Conductor in the *Twilight Zone* episode "A Stop at Willoughby" and Dr. Linke in the *Star Trek* episode "The Empath."

Wingreen still gets a lot of fan-mail for the role of Linke, and can probably expect a lot more now for Fett. But his favorite role will always be Harry the Bartender. "Playing a character for seven years was a lot of fun," he said. "And it allowed me to retire, too!" —Rich Handley





fans are so polite," he said. "They're amazing. People are always saying, 'Thank you for what you did,' and I always say, 'Don't thank me—thank George Lucas for asking me to do it.'"

Yet Bulloch, 55, is a hero to sci-fi and fantasy fans for more than just the role Lucas gave him. He's also a convention regular for his two episodes of *Dr. Who* ("The Space Museum" and "The Time Warrior"), his co-starring role as Edward of Wickham in the British series *Robin of Sherwood*, and his role as Q's assistant Smithers in two James Bond movies, *Octopussy* and *For Your Eyes Only*. (He also played a different part in an earlier Bond flick, *The Spy Who Loved Me*.)

Bulloch—the son of a mushroom farmer, a father of three, and now also a grandfather of three—began studying acting at the age of 12, moving from Somerset and Sussex to theater

school in London. "We concentrated on drama, fencing, stage fighting, and even ballet—imagine me in a pair of tights," he said.

The training paid off: he's worked steadily in film and television ever since, with other notable projects including the UK soap opera *The Newcomers* and the films *Mary, Queen of Scots* and *Swing Kids*, among many others. He recently appeared in the miniseries *Aristocrats*,



is slated to star in an Australian sci-fi film tentatively titled *Master Race*, did a CD-ROM role-playing game with Kenny Baker (R2-D2) and David Prowse, and is awaiting word on *First Frontier*, the sci-fi pilot he made with *Empire's* Admiral Ozzel, Michael Sheard.

Yet even as Boba Fett, he's still something of an enigma to most moviegoers. "I was having a meal with all the guys after a convention in North Carolina," Bulloch recalled. "A woman asked if we would all sign her menu. So we all signed our names and characters—Darth Vader, Chewbacca, R2-D2, Wicket, and me—and gave it back to her. Suddenly I hear this voice behind me say, 'Who the heck is Boba Fett?'"

"She knew all the other characters, but Boba Fett, she hadn't a clue. Fans know him, but the general public doesn't. So in a way, it's quite nice, because he is still a mystery." —SC

## BOSSK: Alan Harris

Few actors have worked on all four *Star Wars* films, but British performer Alan Harris is one of them. Harris played numerous roles in the saga, beginning with Leia's Rebel escort on Yavin IV in *A New Hope*. But his most famous role was Bossk, the Trandoshan bounty hunter introduced in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

The character of Bossk, Harris told the *Insider*, was created by director Irvin Kershner. "He just put things together," Harris recalled. "I was actually in a very early spacesuit—it looked like one of those old diving-bells they used to go down into the sea. Then they made the head, arms, hands, and feet in the model shop."

The combination made for a memorable look, but moving in the reptilian costume wasn't easy—Harris could only see out of one of Bossk's nostrils. Still, he readily reprised the part in *Return of the Jedi*, when Bossk is briefly glimpsed hanging out with Jabba's gang. In *Empire*, he also played Jerrol Blendin, one of Han's post-freezing Cloud City police escorts. "It was a bit like the first scene in *Olivier's Hamlet*," recalls Harris, "when four guys were carrying his father up onto the parapet of the castle."

Harris was also asked to stand-in for Anthony Daniels as C-3PO. Having been Gene Hackman's stand-in in *Superman: The Movie*, he was experienced reciting lines off-camera so the on-screen actors could time their own dialogue. Like 4-LOM actor Chris Parsons, Harris was Daniels' stand-in on both *Empire* and *Jedi*, making him available for other tasks. For instance, he revealed, "the costume for Boba Fett was made around me because I was the same size as Jeremy Bulloch. I did four fittings over about three weeks. The gas jet on his left wrist was practical originally—the effects guys made it a working flame-thrower, but George decided it was too dangerous. Also, it was bloody heavy."

Ironically, Harris had also been a model for Harrison Ford's body-mold for the carbonized Han. "Originally, they made a complete body



mold all around me for Harrison, but they decided they wanted something people could carry so they did another one on the floor." Ford's head was then added to the prop to give the illusion that Han was frozen inside.

Now in his 60s, Harris is working "less and less in the film game; I just do extra work when it comes up." His recent work includes *The Winslow Boys*, the upcoming *102 Dalmatians*—and *The Phantom Menace*. "I was Terence Stamp's double for Valorum. I stood in for him while he was walking with Queen Amidala, and then they did an effects thing to show the little boy between us as we were talking. Later, when Terry did a speech to the Senate, for some reason they weren't satisfied with something below head-level, so they did me doing the speech and pointing down, then just floated my head off digitally and floated his head on."

Harris described himself as "a worker," and said he loves being an extra. Though he hasn't yet been cast for Episode II, he would love some day to be able to say he was among the few to appear in all six *Star Wars* films. —RH







## ZUCKUSS: Cathy Munro

**T**he least amount of information is known about the actress who portrayed Gand bounty hunter Zuckuss—which is fitting, because the character of Zuckuss has a history repeatedly marked by confusion.

The licensed *Star Wars* universe contains contradictory accounts of Zuckuss' background, with the character ranging from a lawful, moral, and traditional Findsmen to an amoral, violent, unorthodox outcast of Gand society. Moreover, when Kenner first released the Zuckuss action figure, its package mistakenly identified the character as 4-LOM, while the droid bounty hunter's package was labeled Zuckuss. This confused collectors who wondered why a droid would have an alien's name and vice versa.

While Lucasfilm's records name Cathy Munro as one of the bounty hunters, no acting guilds count her as a current or former member, making her extremely difficult to track down. In fact, it is unclear as to whether Cathy Munro was her real name or merely a stage-name.

Jeremy Bulloch recalled Munro as having first visited the set because she knew someone involved in the film's production, though he could not recall whom specifically. Alan Harris said she may also have been the actress inside the impolite protocol droid E-3PO, who insulted C-3PO on Bespin with the immortal slur "E Chutal." Neither assumption has yet been confirmed, but one thing is clear: there is more information readily available about the character Cathy Munro brought to life than about the actress herself. —RH

## 4-LOM: Chris Parsons



**L**anding a film role is rarely easy, but sometimes all it takes is fitting the suit. Just ask Chris Parsons, a British actor who at age 18 was called in as an extra on *The Empire Strikes Back*. "I didn't know what the film was about," Parsons told the insider, "but it turned out to be the second *Star Wars*, and I was asked to audition for the role of the white 3PO."

The hardest part, said Parsons, was fitting in the 3PO costume. "A couple of guys before me tried out and couldn't handle the face being put on. It was locked with screws and bolts—once it was on, you were stuck until someone took it off. I was told a couple of guys freaked out, but they put it on me and it fit like a glove." Parsons was asked to do "The Walk" created by Anthony Daniels and left with a good feeling about the audition, unaware this would lead to a variety of other roles, including the infamous bounty hunter 4-LOM.

When *Star Wars* first came out, Parsons, then 16, thought it was a children's film and never bothered to see it. But he saw it three times during its 1979 re-release and grew to love it, soon joining the cast as the white protocol droid on Hoth, K-3PO, and as a stand-in and double for Daniels.

"I was the same height and the same build as Tony," Parsons explained, "so that made it all very easy. We had our own little dressing room on the stage, with a partition between us. It was a very pleasant experience." A permanent fixture on the *Empire* set, Parsons was even approached to hand-model for Mark Hamill while 2-1B adjusted Luke's bionic hand; unfortunately, he recalled, "my habit of nail-biting precluded my taking the role." Instead, he was asked to don another droid outfit for the bounty hunter scenes, and thus 4-LOM was born.

Still, it was a brief shot, and more memorable to Parsons was his time in the 3PO suits. "I attended *Empire's* official premiere as C-3PO," he adds, "then did two or three appearances at events for underprivileged children." He reprised his protocol droid roles for *Return of the Jedi*, then stopped acting to pursue a career in hotel properties, seeking financial stability.



Though 4-LOM has taken on a life all its own in the expanded *Star Wars* universe, to Parsons it was just another role. Stunned to learn of the droid's popularity, he recently ordered a copy of *Tales of the Bounty Hunters* to study 4-LOM's background—and he hopes to begin making convention appearances to share his memories with the many fans he never knew he had. —RH



## DENGAR: Moray Bush

A bulky frame swathed in layers of cloth and body armor. A bandaged head framing a fleshy face marked by a scowl angry enough to thaw carbonite. A weapon of immense size and heft, dwarfed only by the figure holding it. This was Dengar, a fan favorite among bounty hunters because of his unique back-story: nearly killed in a swoop accident, the cyborg blamed Han Solo for his disfigurement and vowed to avenge himself against his old rival. Beneath the gruff exterior, though, was a man of feelings and passions long forgotten.

British ex-boxer Moray Bush, who reportedly died in the mid-1990s, was the man who brought Dengar to life, and those who worked with him on *The Empire Strikes Back* describe him in remarkably similar terms. "Moray was a lovely fellow," remembered Jeremy Bulloch. "He was a huge man, and he had a big heart." Still, Alan Harris (Bossk) recalled an incident when Bush nearly came to blows with a production assistant over a paycheck discrepancy.

David Prowse, who played Darth Vader in the classic trilogy, worked with Moray Bush on such Hammer horror flicks as *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell* and *The Horror of Frankenstein*, as well as several other film and television productions. "He was my stand-in on a lot of my work," Prowse told the *Insider*. "He was a large fellow, like myself, and he always seemed to be there on the same sets I was on." Prowse lost touch with Bush over the years and was saddened to learn of his passing a few years back. "Moray was a great guy," he said. "He was a lot of fun to work with."



Information on the boxer-turned-actor is scant. According to Harris, Bush owned a fish shop in Hastings and worked in films to supplement his income. This, said Harris, is a common trend among British blue-collar workers. While British acting agencies show little record of his film career, one did find evidence of a Mrs. Moray Bush, implying his wife might have acted as well. In addition, Prowse noted that one of Bush's closest friends was Peter Diamond, the stunt coordinator for *Empire*.

Beyond that, Moray Bush's life remains as mysterious as that of the bounty hunter he portrayed 20 years ago. —RH

## IG-88: Paul Klein?

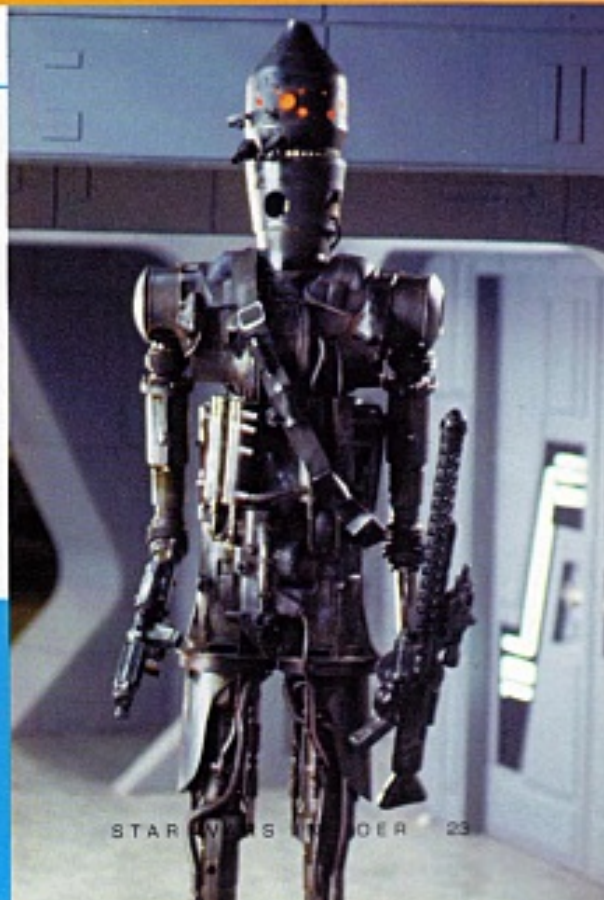
**H**is was the tallest of the original Kenner action figures, a thin assassin droid with a gun in each hand and glowing red eye-sensors that coldly surveyed their surroundings. One part Terminator, one part flute, he spoke not a word but transfixed viewers with his mechanical stare.

IG-88 was unique among the six bounty hunters in *The Empire Strikes Back*, for his was the only character not portrayed by a costume-clad actor. Rather, a prop-body situated among the actors was operated remotely to give the illusion of life.

But who was the technician performing IG-88? Lucasfilm has no official record. The only lead was found on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), which lists a man named Paul Klein as IG-88 (as well as Jabba's palace droids EV-9D9 and BG-J38 in *Return of the Jedi*). But there is no Paul Klein credited on *Empire's* effects crew. Further, the IMDb is often dependent on unconfirmed information submitted by fans, and the *Insider* was unable to determine who submitted the IMDb's IG-88 info. So we don't really know who operated IG-88—which is exactly how the deadly droid would want it. —RH

## The Bounty Hunter Search

If you've got any concrete, substantiated information on Cathy Munro (Zuckuss) or whoever was behind IG-88, please contact the *Insider* immediately! Write to BOUNTY HUNTER SEARCH, c/o Star Wars Insider, P.O. Box 111000, Aurora, CO 80042, or e-mail RebelRumblings@aol.com and put "BOUNTY HUNTER SEARCH" in the subject heading. You are free to use any methods necessary—but no disintegrations.





# JOHN RATZENBERGER: THE POSTMAN ALWAYS STRIKES BACK

**IN DECIPHER'S *Star Wars* Customizable Card Game, Major Bren Derlin's card comes with an odd biographical tidbit: "At the Mos Eisley Cantina, everyone knows his name." If you're scratching your head over this odd link between the sweltering desert world of Tatooine and the icy planet Hoth, don't bother looking through your *Star Wars* novels and comics. It's a joke—an allusion by Decipher to the fact that John Ratzenberger, a bit player in *The Empire Strikes Back*, would go on to star for more than a decade in *Cheers*, one of the most popular TV sitcoms in American history, set in a bar where, as the song goes, everyone knows your name.**

Yes, Cliff Clavin, the Boston letter carrier and know-it-all barfly, is in *The Empire Strikes Back*—at least for a couple of scenes and a couple of lines. It's the mustachioed Ratzenberger, clad in his snow gear, who regretfully informs Princess Leia that the shield doors of Echo Base must be closed against the Hoth night, even though Han Solo hasn't returned from his hunt for Luke Skywalker. He can also be glimpsed and briefly heard again in the scene in which Leia gives the Rebel pilots their orders for evacuating the planet and protecting the Alliance's transports.

Ratzenberger was 32 in the spring of 1979, when he spent about a week on the Echo Base set at Elstree Studios, in a suburb north of London. (Luckily for Ratzenberger, all of Major Derlin's scenes were interior scenes, meaning the actor didn't have to endure sub-zero temperatures and constant winter storms atop the Finse Glacier in Norway, where the exterior scenes on Hoth were shot.)

Two decades—and what the actor genially admits are "a lot of cobwebs"—have obscured some of his memories of his time on the set. He says he admired director Irvin Kershner, whom he describes as "an old-school director." But his memories are crystal clear when he confesses to having his head turned by one particular co-star.

"I remember having an enormous crush on Carrie Fisher," he says, but adds that under the circumstances, he harbored no illusions about the chances for, well, a princess and a guy like him. "I was living in what pretty much

amounted to an abandoned building at the time, so there wasn't much I could offer," he says.

By Ratzenberger's account, he wasn't exactly swept up in the hysteria of being part of the hotly anticipated sequel to what was then the top-grossing movie of all time. "I really didn't know it had become this huge thing, [though] I was aware there was a movie out called *Star Wars*," he says. "It was a job. I was hired to do a job, I showed up to do a job, and I went home."

Nor was it even a particularly out-of-the-ordinary job for the young actor. At the time, he recalls, he was one of several American actors living in London who would get the call whenever a movie shot in the area called for an American in uniform. Ratzenberger's early work, indeed, is a tale of bit parts and changing ranks: He played lieutenants in *A Bridge Too Far* and *Gandhi*, a corporal in *Yanks*, a chief in *Firefox*, a sergeant in *Hanover Street*, and also donned government gear for *Superman* and *Superman II*. Under those circumstances, one can see how Bren Derlin was just another major—albeit one from a galaxy far, far away.

Still, Ratzenberger got to that galaxy along an unusual route. Before he headed for London in 1971, his resumé included such jobs as an apprentice blacksmith in northern Vermont and a deckhand on an oyster boat off the coast of his native New England. It was a tax refund from his stint as a deckhand, in fact, that sent him across the pond. As Ratzenberger recalls, the check happened to be the exact

same amount as a ticket on a charter flight to England that he saw in a newspaper. He had a friend in London, so he left on a lark for a three-week visit—never suspecting he would stay 10 years.

It wasn't long before Ratzenberger and friend Ray Hassett began achieving considerable renown as Sal's Meat Market, an improv duo whose freewheeling 90-minute shows would cast each of them in as many as 20 characters apiece. The two were veterans by the time an agent approached them and asked if they'd thought about movies. Ratzenberger's screen debut came in 1976's *The Ritz*, directed by Richard Lester (*A Hard Day's Night*), who would later direct him in *Superman II*.

Besides his stints as an American in uniform, Ratzenberger also did extensive voice work, providing English dubs for foreign films—a key addition to what he calls "my bag of tricks." That work spotlights what the actor sees as an advantage of having learned his craft in England: "They don't pigeonhole you over there," he says. "As a journeyman actor, you were expected to do everything."

It's a matter-of-fact approach that Ratzenberger traces back to having grown up



## COLD COMFORT

WHEN LUKE SKYWALKER DOESN'T RETURN TO THE REBEL BASE ON HOTH, IT'S MAJOR DERLIN (PLAYED BY JOHN RATZENBERGER) THAT MUST BREAK THE NEWS TO PRINCESS LEIA.





John Ratzenberger (far right) and other Rebels share a laugh in front of the blue screen during a break from filming *The Empire Strikes Back*.

working with his hands. It also meant that for the young actor playing Major Derlin, Harrison Ford was someone to watch. Ford, like Ratzenberger, was a self-taught actor without formal training. And like Ratzenberger, he'd worked as a carpenter—though Ratzenberger notes that Ford was a fine carpenter who worked on finishing and other jobs, while Ratzenberger himself was (and is) a house framer more used to working with two-by-fours. Nonetheless, Ratzenberger remembers watching Ford succeed and being inspired.

"I remember thinking, 'Wow, that's pretty cool,'" he says. "If he could do it, I could do it."

Indeed he could: beginning in 1982, Ratzenberger would become a fixture on TV wearing another uniform—this time for the postal service—on *Cheers*. That role sprung from a failed audition that Ratzenberger turned into a success by drawing on the oldest trick in his bag—his years of improv.

"What I do well is just improvise within the situation," he says. "Drop me into the situation and I'll do fine."

Ratzenberger says he originally read for a non-descript character for *Cheers*—an approach that was too stilted for him to shine. He was walking out the door when he asked *Cheers*' creative team if their show had a certain

character he felt was needed.

"Being a New Englander, I knew that in every bar I've ever been in, there's a bar know-it-all," Ratzenberger says. After piquing the group's interest, he began to improvise just such a part, using anything at hand—such as people's clothes and last names—as his material. He left the group laughing and eventually was called back and asked to become the bar know-it-all he'd quickly invented—the character that would become Cliff Clavin.

Having won the job with improv, Ratzenberger would use the skill to create any number of off-the-cuff lines for Cliff during *Cheers*' 11-year run—and then for the computer-generated characters to whom he lent voices in three blockbuster Pixar films, including *A Bug's Life* and both of the *Toy Story* movies, in which he plays the talking pig toy, Hamm.

Ratzenberger has also embraced a growing role with a good cause. He's the chairman of an online charity called [childrenwithdiabetes.com](http://childrenwithdiabetes.com),

offering children who have diabetes and their families everything from medical advice to a place to chat with other children and families. (The site is hosting a karate tournament in Los Angeles to benefit the charity on July 16.)

[Childrenwithdiabetes.com](http://Childrenwithdiabetes.com) sprung from his desire to find a way to connect researchers working (sometimes in ignorance of each other's efforts) to find a cure for the disease. "They don't talk to each other," Ratzenberger says. "I thought, 'In the age of the Internet, that's stupid.'"

Between that work and his ongoing acting career (he next appears in *Lucky Town*, with Martin Sheen), Ratzenberger may not have a lot of time to look back at what was a very brief tour of duty on Hoth 20 years ago. Nor, by his account, does he get much fan mail for his *Star Wars* work. But for this journeyman-actor-turned-master, the body of work he has put together is proof enough.

Indeed, whether they're fans of George Lucas' saga, a beloved bar in Boston, Pixar's pioneering productions, or all three, everybody knows John Ratzenberger's name. **E**

## WHO'S NEXT?

GOT A FAVORITE STAR WARS SUPPORTING ACTOR YOU'VE NEVER SEEN INTERVIEWED? E-MAIL YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO SCOTT CHERNOFF IN THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE: [SWUNIVERSE@AOL.COM](mailto:SWUNIVERSE@AOL.COM). ALL E-MAILS ARE READ, BUT DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS, INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES ARE UNFORTUNATELY NOT POSSIBLE. THIS IS NOT THE ADDRESS FOR REBEL RUMBLINGS OR LUCASFILM CASTING. LUMINOUS BEINGS ARE WE—NOT THIS CRUDE MATTER.



# DIRECTOR IRVIN

"GEORGE WANTED ME TO MAKE A BETTER PICTURE THAN *STAR WARS*..."

**WHEN GEORGE LUCAS CHOSE IRVIN KERSHNER to direct the follow-up to his smash success *Star Wars*, the selection seemed to come out of nowhere. After all, Kershner was a respected, veteran filmmaker with several hits under his belt, but he'd never done anything like a science-fiction or fantasy film, and his old-school Hollywood history appeared light-years away from Lucas' new movie-making revolution. But the biggest—and most welcome—surprise turned out to be just how brilliantly Kershner fulfilled his mission, crafting a masterpiece of epic proportions and filling Lucas' shoes with confidence, style, and finesse.**

A classical musician as a child in Philadelphia, Kersh (as he's affectionately known to many) switched paths after three years flying B-24s bombers in World War II. He studied art in New York, moving into graphic design and photography for book and album covers. The transition to moving pictures came when he began teaching photography at USC, where his faculty status enabled him to take free film courses. After a stint making films in the middle east, Kershner returned to America and worked extensively in TV before finally landing his first feature, 1958's *Stakeout on Dope Street*, and a contract with Warner Bros.

Before *Empire*, Kershner had directed Sean Connery in *A Fine Madness*, Barbara Streisand in the comedy *Up the Sandbox*, George C. Scott as the *The Firm-Flam Man*, the thriller *Eyes of Laura Mars* with Faye Dunaway and Tommy Lee Jones, and *The Return of a Man Called Horse*, a 1976 sequel that caught Lucas' eye for the way it went beyond 1970's original *A Man Called Horse* (which Kershner did not direct). More sequels followed *Empire*, including *RoboCop 2* and the terrific 1983 James Bond film *Never Say Never Again* (an independent production that returned Connery to the 007 role). Kershner can also be seen in a prominent role in Martin Scorsese's epic *The Last Temptation of Christ*, in which he plays Zebedee, the father of John and James. He also acted in the Steven Seagal actioner *On Deadly Ground* and appeared as a teacher in *Angus*.

This year, Kershner, now 77, begins helming *Cecilia*, a love story he wrote featuring the music of Puccini. He's also producing two films in 2000, a comedic mystery called *Great Sex*, and the Russian period piece *Red Angels*. When the *Insider* caught up with him, Kershner

was preparing to leave the next day for the Brussels International Film Festival, where he was due to receive a lifetime achievement award. But even though his mind was on an award recognizing his whole career, and 20 years had passed since he directed *The Empire Strikes Back*, Kershner was bursting with memories of his tour of duty in the *Star Wars* universe.

#### CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK.

I can't believe it's 20 years! It's just impossible, because it's so fresh in my mind—everything. Because it was really one of the most important things I ever did in my life. I was thrown into it—I knew nothing about special effects. George had faith in me, and I wanted to prove to him that he was right.

I knew there was reaction by some of the people at Fox against me—not me particularly, but they felt I was too old, because it's a young person's film. But George felt I was right for it. I appreciate so much the fact that George had confidence in me. It's a good feeling when anybody supports you, and that's one of the big problems with Hollywood. People don't support each other—they tend to destroy each other. There's very little support, and I felt I had the support.

#### YOU WERE DEFINITELY AN UNEXPECTED CHOICE AT THE TIME—WAS LUCAS' OFFER AS MUCH OF A SURPRISE TO YOU AS IT WAS TO FOX?

I did not expect it. I knew George, and we played tennis occasionally. But when he asked me to do it, I was surprised. It also kind of frightened me. I turned it down at first. *Star Wars* was one of the greatest successes we ever had in film, and I felt to follow it would only be to

make a film not as good, because it would not have the freshness of the initial source.

I had done another sequel, *Return of a Man Called Horse*, but that one I did because I wanted to do the first one, but I had taken another film. When I saw their film, I wasn't pleased with it at all, so when I heard they wanted to do the sequel, I said, "That's for me." But I didn't want to do another sequel, and also I didn't want to do a sequel to *Star Wars*, which was so phenomenal.

#### SO YOU HAD ALREADY SEEN *STAR WARS*?

Oh, I was there at the first showing with my young son! Not only that, but I had seen a trailer George made that he showed at a New Year's party at Coppola's house in San Francisco. We were all baffled, to tell you the truth. We did not believe that he was going to get away with this. We all had little conversations on the side—"What do we say to him? It's a cartoon, not a real science-fiction picture!" We didn't realize, of course, that it wasn't supposed to be a science-fiction picture. It was supposed to be a fairy tale, with mythic qualities, using the qualities of science-fiction. But scientifically, it's full of baloney! It's a joke—which was wonderful, which is what makes it work.

This is a film of good guys and bad guys, and that's what's good about it. I never read a lot of science-fiction and I was not a giant fan. But to me, the research meant reading Freud and Jung on myths and fairy tales. There are certain themes in fairy tales which keep being repeated and are very scary for children—and I think it's better to be scared about fables that make a point than to be scared by gunplay on television.

#### EMPIRE DELVES EVEN FURTHER INTO THOSE CLASSIC THEMES. HOW CONSCIOUS WERE YOU OF EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF THE *STAR WARS* SAGA WITH THIS FILM?

Let me explain something here. Very, very important. When I talked to George about it before I took the movie, he explained something. He said, "Look, the second film of the *Star Wars* trilogy, if it isn't as good or better than



# KERSHNER

**AN INSIDER EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW** BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

*Star Wars*, it won't be a series. It'll die right there. It's got to stand up to the original and go beyond it, if possible." George wanted me to make a better picture than *Star Wars*. But of course he did the original groundwork, and what I did was make it as good as possible.

**ONCE YOU SIGNED ON, HOW DID YOU BEGIN YOUR MASSIVE ASSIGNMENT?**

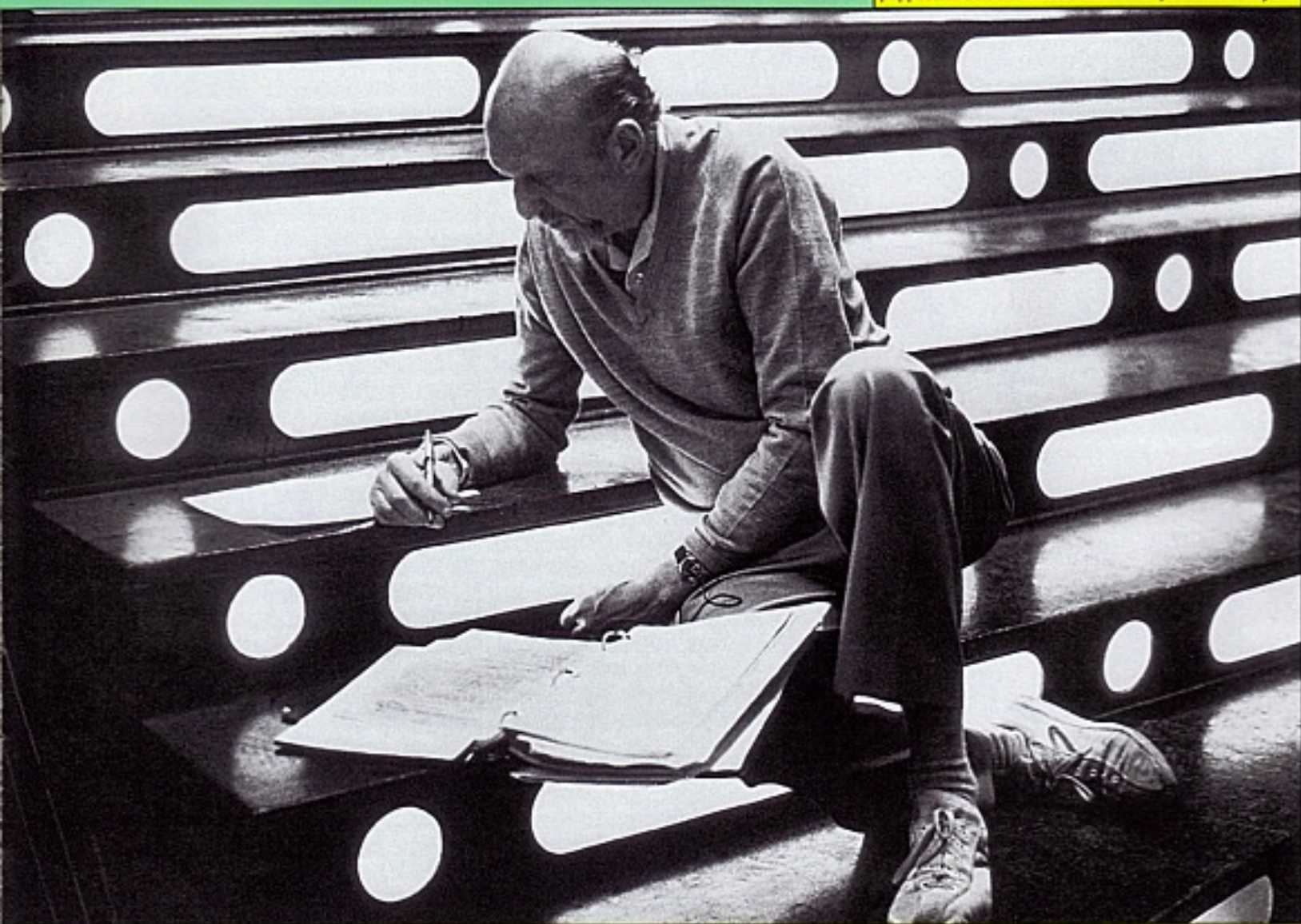
I went up and met with George at his house, and he introduced me to a lot of the people working on it. Then, when the initial

draft script came in, we weren't happy with it, but there was no chance to rewrite it, because the writer died. So we started meeting with Larry [Kasdan] and re-working the script, and we all threw in ideas. I kept thinking in terms of character, George was thinking a lot more of the actual story, and then Larry was thinking of dialogue, which ties in with character and story. So it was a very good moment there. We worked for many weeks, and finally we got the script.

Then I went over to London, and there were storyboards done by Joe Johnston of the



**MAKING IT WORK:** Kershner (left) confers with Billy Dee Williams as the crew members figure out how to bring a C-3PO puppet to life on Chewbacca's back on *Empire's* Cloud City set.



Irvin Kershner deep in thought on the steps of the carbon-freezing chamber set for *The Empire Strikes Back*.



**"GEORGE SAID... 'REMEMBER, NOTHING'S GONNA WORK.' HE MEANT THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ON THE SET, AND HE WAS RIGHT. THE FIRST SHOT OF THE WHOLE FILM DIDN'T WORK."**

beginning of the film, the ice planet. He had done a beautiful job on that, and then I spent close to a year adjusting them and doing my own storyboards for the rest of the film. It took me almost a year, but I divided my day between working on the storyboard and then late in the afternoon meeting with the crew, the production designer, costume, and casting.

**HOW CLOSELY DOES THE FINAL FILM MATCH YOUR STORYBOARD?**

I had to stick to it in this one. Usually you don't, but in this one, we had to, because the sets and special effects were based on the storyboards. I drew it myself very roughly, then I brought in a graphic artist who did beautiful 8x10s. I made two books, one for myself that stayed in England, and one for ILM and George. Every shot was numbered, so if something was happening on the set and I found I couldn't shoot something the way it was storyboarded, I would call him and say, "Look, shot 24GL," and he would turn to that page. We had perfect communication with California.

But it was a terribly difficult job, and it was



**FORWARD MOMENTUM:** Kershner contended with an Artoo that wouldn't roll across the floor of the Hoth set—but he hit upon a simple solution.

a learning process, because during the film, I learned what I could and couldn't do. I'll tell you the most important thing: George said something to me before I left. He said, "Remember, nothing's gonna work." He meant the special effects on the set, and he was right. The first shot of the whole film didn't work.

**WHICH SHOT WAS THAT?**

Well, in Norway, the tauntaun froze up. We couldn't get the smoke to come out of the nose, and we couldn't get the movements right because the damn thing froze—the wires inside froze up. The first day of shooting was 26 below zero. It was brutal.

But then when we got back to Elstree the first day, we were shooting in the tunnels of the ice planet, and R2-D2 was supposed to race along the corridor. Everything was tested the night before. Everything was set. I staged it, we lit it, and they gave me this little remote control for R2-D2. I said, "Action," and the thing went about two feet, started turning in little circles, and wouldn't go forward. I said, "OK, this is the first shot—if this is how the whole film's going to be, we'll never finish." The special effects people turned it over, started to work, and said, "OK, we got it." We started again, and it did the same thing—it went three feet and did these little crazy circles. It looked like it went mad—which was kind of interesting, but not right for the scene.

I said, "Fellas, what's wrong?" They said, "Well, we tried it out last night on the white floorboards, but when we came in this morning, they had put this artificial ice on, which is plastic, and it can't work on the plastic." I said,

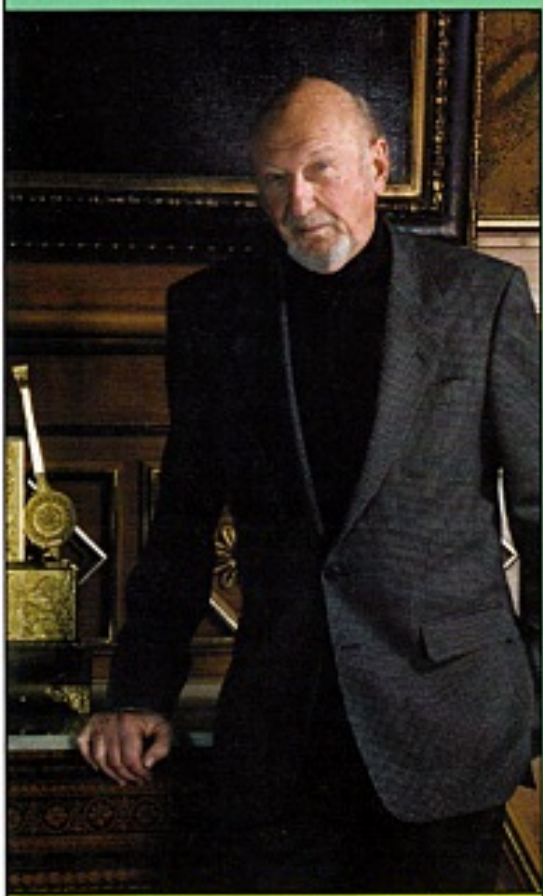
"Well, now you tell me."

So I stood there like a jerk—what the hell do I do? The first shot, I can't even get it done! I said, "OK, bring me the empty one." So they took away the motorized R2-D2, and they're all very embarrassed—I was embarrassed for them—and they brought in the empty one. I said, "Put a wire on it, I'm gonna change the shot," and I changed it, putting boxes in front so you couldn't see there was a wire pulling the bottom. We simply pulled it along as quickly as possible and did the shot in one take. And you know what it cost? Nothing. Know what that other one cost? Probably \$50,000. It worked in later scenes, though.

Another thing was when the Wookiee is running with C-3PO on his back, taken apart. The arm is supposed to be moving and the head turning, because he's shouting and waving his arms to show that he's still alive. I didn't want just a dead robot there. So they had motors in the head and arms. Forget it! It looked like he was drunk, the way it was moving. I said, "We can't shoot that." The prop man says, "Give me 10 minutes, I think I can fix it."

When we came back, the arm was flailing around and the head was twisting and turning, and it was wonderful. I looked up, and saw the prop guy running along beside it, way out of frame, with a very long fishing rod and a nylon wire going down to the arm. There was more wire from the head to each hand of the Wookiee, so as Chewbacca moved his hands, C-3PO's head turned. That was the way the shot was done. Cost: zero.

But I always remembered the words of our leader, who said, "Remember, nothing's



**MOTION MASTER:** 20 years after helming *Empire*, Kershner is directing *Cecilia*, a romantic drama he wrote.



gonna work." The second thing George said when I went off was really terrific, and I've never heard it from any other producer. I said to him, "You know, I'm going to be learning the special effects." He said, "Don't worry about it. You dream up what you want to do, and no matter what they say on the set—they'll say, 'You can't do that, it's impossible'—you do it. We'll find a way to make it work." Do you know how liberating that is? I kept these thoughts in my mind constantly. I'd think, "Am I making it too difficult for them? Well, George said not to worry about it," so I just did it, and they made it work. They always made it work.

#### HOW OFTEN DID LUCAS VISIT THE SET?

Not often. He came over before the film started, when we were working on Yoda. That was a problem. But once we started, he only came twice.

#### WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM WITH YODA?

Getting a Yoda! It had never been done in a film before, where a puppet played a living thing. And we were never happy with any of the things that were sculpted until the makeup man, who had been an engineer, said "I think I can make something that works," and that's when George came over. The makeup man was Stuart Freeborn, sweetest man in the world. He engineered and built Yoda. He did a beautiful job—except when we went to shoot, I couldn't get the damn blink to work, and the blink was important. I only got, I think, two blinks out of the whole damn picture. Because they were always fixing it.

It was very difficult for Mark because Mark couldn't hear Yoda talk—everybody was under the floorboards. I'm the only one who heard both. We would rehearse, and he'd have an earphone and he'd hear Yoda, and then we would take out the earphones and he would do the take with the timing right. Mark really did a terrific job. I hope he gets more credit for it as times goes on.

George also came over once when I was shooting the X-wing being pulled out of the water and moving across the swamp, based on the magic power of our little man. It had taken some time to set up, a few hours actually, and now we did the shot, and the haze was right—because we had the set closed off so that you actually had clouds hanging—and then the ship came up out of the water. It looked beautiful, and there was moss and seaweed, and the water is dripping off, and suddenly the two wings just collapsed.

I felt so badly for George, because I knew it was his money. I said, "What happened?" And



**CHARACTER BUILDER:** In addition to Lando (above), Kershner was responsible for introducing such major new *Star Wars* characters as Yoda, Boba Fett and the Emperor in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

they said, "Well, we didn't realize it wasn't waterproof, and the wings are wood, and they couldn't take all the weight." I said, "Now you tell me." It took hours to rebuild it—they put in structural things and a little steel. 10 hours to do the shot, and it was maybe six seconds.

#### BUT WHAT AN AMAZING SIX SECONDS. I LOVE ALL THE EXPANSIVE SHOTS OF DAGOBAH.

Yeah, isn't it beautiful? But you know, when I came on the swamp set, it wasn't ready. A lot of the sets were never ready, so while they were working on one part of it, I'd start shooting in another part. I had to shoot the end of the scene before the beginning, because they weren't finished. While we were lighting, they were banging away with hammers and pulling things in place. Also, people were sliding and slipping into the water, and we had a couple of broken arms. It was very dangerous because the water was about three feet high and we had all this earth around it. People were sliding and bang, they'd go falling. There was a wooden barrier—you hit that and it was not good.

We were all wearing boots, and sometimes I had to wear a gas mask, because we had so much smoke pumped into the set, and I stood there for 12 hours a day—I didn't leave, except to go to lunch. The rest of the crew would go back and forth outside, but I wouldn't see daylight. So I started getting ill, and they gave me a gas mask with a microphone inside, so I could talk to and hear everybody.

#### YOU MUST'VE LOOKED AND SOUNDED LIKE A CHARACTER IN THE MOVIE.

Yeah, it sounds like fun, but it wasn't. It was a hell of an experience—and it went on a long time, unfortunately. I once called George

and said, "George, it's taking a little longer than we thought. Do you want me to take some pages out of the script or, you know, what the hell can we do?" And he said, "Don't do anything, just keep on shooting." Those were his words. And that's, of course, the one thing you want to hear. In terms of just the logistics, George would've been much happier had I been able to shoot it faster. But frankly, to get what I was trying to get, I couldn't. I couldn't get the performances as well. I'll give you an example:

We were shooting a very difficult scene with Harrison, and there were some special effects in the scene. We shot it in one take, and I said, "That's it, we move on." Harrison said, "Wait, hold it—tell me something: was I good, or did the special effects work and therefore you don't want to shoot it again?" I said, "Harrison, by now you gotta trust me. You were great. The special effects happened to work, but you were great." And he looked at me with that wonderful look of his. "Uh-huh, okay," he said, and he pointed his finger at me, wagging it, and said, "Now you better watch yourself."

Because the temptation, if the special effects work, is to say, "OK, the performance is good enough." Well, I couldn't get away with that with Harrison, and I didn't want to get away with anything with Mark, because I knew that it was important for him, and for Carrie. So I'd have one eye on the special effects and one eye on my characters—and boy, they better come together, or else it didn't work.

#### SOUNDS LIKE AN IMPOSSIBLE AMOUNT OF STUFF TO KEEP TRACK OF.

And this was before digital—we did it the hard way. We had 64 sets, but we had only seven





**BALANCE OF THE FILM:** Kershner's emphasis on character through action crystallized in the final lightsaber duel, painstakingly rehearsed (above) by Mark Hamill and stuntman Bob Anderson.

stages, because the eighth stage, which would've made it much easier, burned down. Kubrick burned it down. A week before we started shooting, we got word that our eighth stage, a beautiful, big stage which we were counting on, just burned down because Kubrick had the labyrinth in it [for *The Shining*], and something happened and the damn thing burned down. So we were stuck with one stage less.

One of the most difficult things was shooting Darth Vader talking to Mark, who's hanging out there 30 feet above the ground, held up by a little wire. Two giant fans were blasting him, and he's shouting lines that had nothing to do with what anybody else heard, because the crew didn't know anything about [Vader being Luke's father], and Darth Vader didn't know anything about it. I gave Darth Vader lines so that his actions would match what he seemed to be saying. I told him, "On this word, you raise your arm and hold it up, make a fist. On this one, you shake your head, and on this one, you turn your body slightly and forcefully, as if you were angry." But he couldn't hear Mark. Nobody could hear him except me because I had the earphones. But I heard the lines, and Mark's emotions were perfect.

Later, at the premiere, David Prowse said to me, "Why didn't you tell me that I was his father? I would've played it differently." But he was very good.

**HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE REVELATION THAT VADER WAS LUKE'S FATHER? I REMEMBER BEING BLOWN AWAY BY THAT WHEN I WAS A KID, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT.**

I'll tell you what I discovered, because I did a lot of questioning of friends and their children.

If they're seven years old or under, they all say Darth Vader is lying. But when they get to be eight and above, they accept it, and it sort of makes them think. See, there's a line where you begin to accept the existence of evil, and before that, you don't really accept evil or death.

**"THE CREW DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT [VADER BEING LUKE'S FATHER], AND DARTH VADER DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT."**

**YOU'VE SAID BEFORE THAT YOU WERE APPROACHED ABOUT DIRECTING RETURN OF THE JEDI BUT YOU WEREN'T INTERESTED.**

I don't even remember who asked me. I was asked if I wanted to do the next one, and it was in the middle of filming, and I said, "I don't think I'd be interested." It was so difficult, and I didn't want to get classified, because there are different kinds of films I wanted to do, like the one I'm working on now. But I wish I had done it, because I felt I could've done something wonderful with it. It didn't come off as well as I would've liked, but it did very well, so what the hell. But yeah, I regret it. I should've, you know, if he was serious, if George really wanted me, I think I should've done it.

**IF GEORGE CAME TO YOU AND ASKED YOU TO CONSIDER DIRECTING EPISODE III, WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED?**

Well, he wouldn't, because I'm sure that everyone considers me too old for that kind of thing. But I know I could do a great job. I know I could do the next one—and fantastically, I would put more humor into the next one, much more humor.

**WHAT WAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE SPECIAL EDITION OF EMPIRE?**

Very little, because the film is essentially the same. Just a little scene, the snow monster, and they added some windows in the walk-through, and it's the same film. It was less changed than any of the others. George told me what he was going to do—but he surprised me with the walk through the corridor of Cloud City. I complained at the time that it was all enclosed and you couldn't see the city and it looked like a cheap set. George heard about that, so he opened up the corridor. When I went up there to look at the timing and all that, I was so shocked, and he was so pleased. He said, "That's a surprise for you."

I don't know, I feel that we didn't need the snow monster, but it's OK, didn't hurt anything. And it was great what he did with the corridor—that was sensational. Then one shot of Darth Vader walking into the ship, which was kind of good. It was OK, but the important thing they did at ILM was take out the black lines on Hoth, and of course they cleaned up the sound beautifully. But it's the same film.

**WERE YOU SURPRISED AT THE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION THE RE-RELEASE RECEIVED?**

Absolutely. It's unheard of, 17 years later, for a film to come out and do that kind of business. It was amazing.

**DO YOU STILL GET LETTERS FROM PEOPLE ABOUT EMPIRE?**

Constantly. I get them from all over the world. And I keep meeting filmmakers who say, "I'm making films because of Empire."

**DOES IT BOTHER YOU THAT OF ALL THE FILMS YOU'VE DONE, EMPIRE IS STILL THE ONE MOST PEOPLE WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT?**

Yeah, but that's life. You know, every author will tell you the book they're famous for is not their favorite. And George said something interesting. At one point, I think it was when I went up to do the timing of the Special Edition, he said, "You know, I wanted to get away from *Star Wars*. I tried very hard, but now I accept it. I'm Mr. *Star Wars*, and there's nothing I can do about it."

**AND YOU'RE MR. EMPIRE STRIKES BACK.**

I'm Mr. *Empire Strikes Back*. So that's it. ☉



# STAR WARS

## EPISODE I

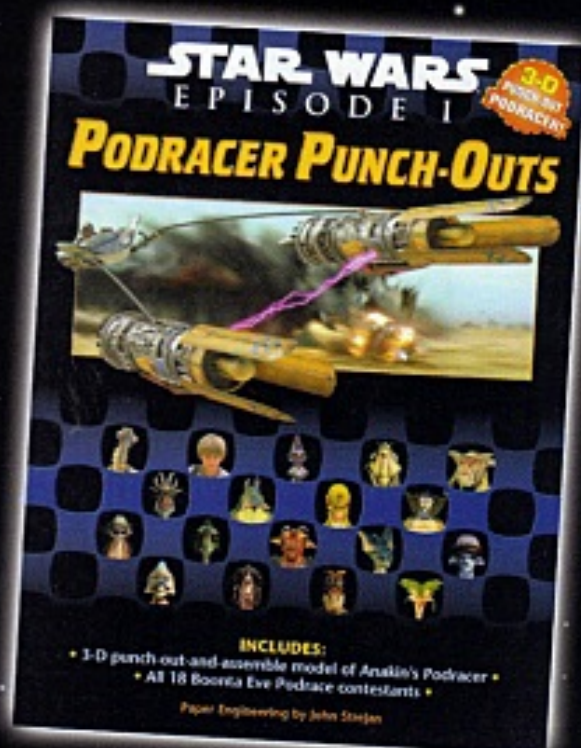
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AN INSIDER EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

# LAWRENCE KASDAN SCREENWRITER

"IT WAS MUCH EASIER TO DO WHAT GEORGE WANTED ON *EMPIRE* THAN IT WAS WITH *RAIDERS*..."

**WHEN YOUR CAREER IN THE MOVIES begins with the screenplays for *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *Return of the Jedi*, what do you possibly do for an encore? I mean, after authoring that classic trio of films, couldn't you pretty much just retire and pat yourself on the back for a job well done?**

Not if you're Lawrence Kasdan, who has gone on to become one of the most successful and acclaimed filmmakers in Hollywood. Indeed, his second film as both director and co-writer, *The Big Chill* (released in 1983, the same year as *Jedi*), turned out to be not only a major hit but every bit as classic and beloved as his Lucasfilm triumphs.

Kasdan's first film as director was the 1981 film noir *Body Heat*, which helped launch the careers of William Hurt and Kathleen Turner, and immediately announced Kasdan as a major filmmaking force. *The Big Chill* followed, capturing the imagination of the baby boomer generation it depicted, and again introducing a whole new pantheon stars: Hurt, Glenn Close, Kevin Kline, Jeff Goldblum, Jobeth Williams, and Tom Berenger.

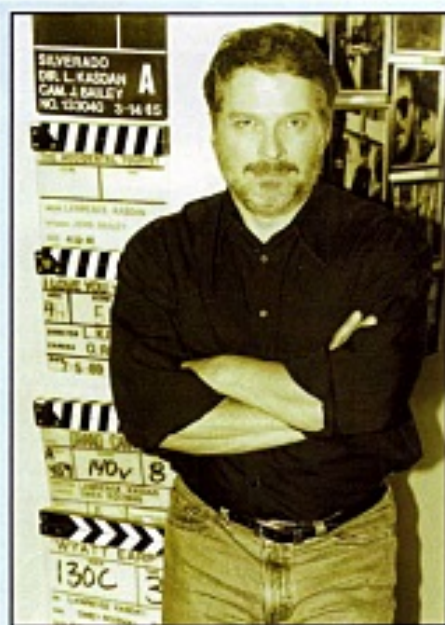
Throughout his career, Kasdan has deftly moved from genre to genre while maintaining his signature style—an emphasis on character, wry humor, and quiet perseverance—not to mention fine ensemble casts, often featuring Kline, Hurt, or Kevin Costner. His films as a writer-director include the winning Western *Silverado*; *Grand Canyon*, a sprawling, moving, and funny take on life in L.A.; the darkly and weirdly hilari-

ous screwball comedy *I Love You to Death*; and *The Accidental Tourist*, an offbeat gem that won Geena Davis an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress. His most recent film was *Mumford*, a quirky comedy about a small town and its unconventional (and impostor) psychologist.

Kasdan also wrote the scripts for *Continental Divide* (one of John Belushi's last films) and the 1992 blockbuster *The Bodyguard*, which he also produced; he produced most of his directorial outings, as well as the underrated Martin Short comedy *Cross My Heart* in 1987, and the recent Drew Barrymore vehicle *Home Fries*. Kasdan also played Dr. Green opposite Jack Nicholson in *As Good as It Gets*, and you can see him in his own *I Love You to Death* and John Landis' great *Into the Night*.

Kasdan, 51, was born in Miami, grew up in Virginia, and raised his two sons in Los Angeles—both are filmmakers, with older son Jake having directed the 1998 comedy *Zero Effect* and the pilot for the Star Wars-referencing TV show *Freaks and Geeks*. While he hasn't worked with his sons, the elder Kasdan did write *Grand Canyon* with his wife Meg and *Silverado* with his brother Mark.

Similarly, Kasdan's first three blockbusters



were all collaborations: *Empire's* first draft was by Leigh Brackett (see sidebar, page 34) from Lucas' story, and *Jedi* was co-written with Lucas, while *Raiders* stemmed from a story by Lucas and Phil Kaufman (who later directed *The Right Stuff*). And of course, all three were directed by others: *Raiders* by Steven Spielberg, *Jedi* by Richard Marquand, and *Empire* by Irvin Kershner. But Kasdan's stamp on those three films is indelible, from their tight, economical structure to the crisp, witty, and memorable dialogue.

In *Empire*, some of Kasdan's smartest writ-





**"YOU LIKE ME BECAUSE I'M A SCOUNDREL":** Han's smooth move is cut short by C-3PO.

ing is secondary to the action, as when Han, under siege, quickly barks of Threepio, "Shut him up or shut him down." Other times, his words are forcefully in your face: "Do. Or do not. There is no try."

Yup, Yoda's legendary teachings, Lando's legendary come-ons ("You truly belong here with us among the clouds"), and Vader's villainous demands ("Asteroids do not concern me, Admiral—I want that ship, not excuses"), plus the sparks flying between Han and Leia ("I'd just as soon kiss a Wookiee"—"I can arrange that. You could use a good kiss!")—it all came from Lawrence Kasdan, a man whose contributions to the *Star Wars* universe cannot be underestimated.

#### **HOW DID YOU KEEP *EMPIRE* FROM AVOIDING ALL THOSE TYPICAL SEQUEL PITFALLS?**

That was all George. His grand design for the first three movies was great, and the second act of any three act structure is always the best. The first act, *Star Wars*, was the most amazing movie, I think. But a lot of people like *Empire* best because it's the most interesting.

The fun thing about *Empire* is that in the second act you don't have to spend time setting things up—it's already set up. You get to leave things hanging, because you know there's a third act coming. In fact, in traditional three act structure, you want everything to be falling apart at the end of the second act—and that's exactly what's going on. Luke has lost his hand, and Han is frozen. Everything's gone to hell, and we're suddenly mystified by Darth and what his story is. That's much more fun than either the first or the third act in terms of writing.

#### **THE *EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* WAS YOUR FIRST WRITING CREDIT—BUT IT WASN'T YOUR FIRST SCREENPLAY.**

It was the first thing released that I had written—that's the best way to describe it. I sold two screenplays, and then wrote *Raiders* for George. When I finished writing *Raiders*, Leigh Brackett had died, and George asked me to come in on *Empire*.

#### **HOW DID YOU GET HOOKED UP WITH GEORGE ON *RAIDERS* IN THE FIRST PLACE?**

The second script I sold, *Continental Divide*, was executive-produced by Steven Spielberg. I wasn't thrilled by how it turned out, but it was a good script. Steven bought it, and when I met him he said, "I'm gonna do this adventure movie with George, and I want you to write it, so come meet George." I went to meet George and he gave me the job right there.

#### **RIGHT ON THE SPOT, WITHOUT HAVING READ ANYTHING OF YOURS?**

Well, no—he read *Continental Divide*. They were looking for Indy and Marion to have that same kind of relationship that John Belushi and Blair Brown had in *Continental Divide*. So I got *Raiders*, and it took me about six months to write it—but first, we worked out the story for a couple of weeks, George, Steven and me.

When I finished *Raiders*, I took the script up to George to give to him. I was very ceremonial back then. He said, "Look, Leigh Brackett has died, and I want you to write *Empire*." I said, "Well, don't you think you ought to read *Raiders* first?" And he said, "Well, if I read it tonight and I hate it, I'll withdraw this offer."

But he didn't—he really liked it, and I started working on *Empire* immediately. They were under the gun, because they were in pre-production already, and they had no script.



**"LUMINOUS BEINGS ARE WE, NOT THIS CRUDE MATTER":** Yoda was Kasdan's favorite character to write.



**HOW DIFFERENT IS THE LEIGH BRACKETT DRAFT FROM WHAT ENDED UP BEING SHOT?**

There's nothing. There's no connection. You know, George is a better one to answer that question, but I never looked at it that seriously. We didn't work from that. He said, "God bless her, but she wasn't doing anything like I wanted it." She had written some great movies. But I don't think they were ever on the same page about *Empire*. I think George hired her because of her extraordinary history. But what George needs, and particularly in *Star Wars*, is someone who's going to do what he had in mind—make it happen.

**YOU'RE USED TO BEING IN CREATIVE CONTROL THESE DAYS. WAS IT DIFFICULT BEING MORE OF A HIRED HAND, MAKING SOMEONE ELSE'S VISION HAPPEN?**

Yeah, but this was total fun. *Raiders* was really the orientation, because I had just gotten in the business—I had just sold two screenplays in rapid succession, after years of trying with no luck. I started writing screenplays in 1968, and I didn't sell one until 1977. And then, shortly after selling the second screenplay, I was in this house with George and Steven, trying to work out the story for *Raiders*. That was pretty heady. They were big then, you know—not like now, when they're all washed up. They were big names back then.

**IF CONTINENTAL DIVIDE WAS YOUR SECOND SCREENPLAY SOLD, WHAT WAS THE FIRST?**

I sold *The Bodyguard* first—it didn't get made for 16 years. Then I sold *Continental Divide*—it didn't get made for about three years. Then I wrote *Raiders*, but the first thing out was *Empire*, which I had written after all those movies. Then in 1981, *Body Heat*—my first movie as a director—was released, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* was released, and *Continental Divide* was released—all within, like, three months.

**WOW. BEFORE YOU STARTED WORKING WITH GEORGE AND STEVEN, WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF STAR WARS?**

Totally cool. It just blew everybody's mind. And *Close Encounters* too. I mean, that's what was so amazing about getting that *Raiders* job. It was *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* put together, you know? So it was pretty amazing.

**THAT MUST HAVE BEEN OVERWHELMING FOR A NEWLY SUCCESSFUL WRITER.**

Yeah. I had only been in the business for, like, a month. I had been struggling for years, and suddenly I was working out this story with

# THE LIFE OF LEIGH BRACKETT

EMPIRE'S CO-SCREENWRITER WAS ALREADY A MOVIE LEGEND

by Jaime Painter

**WHILE 22 YEARS HAVE ELAPSED since the passing of author Leigh Brackett, her legacy has in no way diminished. *Star Wars* fans know her best as the screenwriter of the first version of the script of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Tragically, she died of cancer at the age of 62 in 1978, one month after the completion of her *Empire* script. Following her death, George Lucas hired Lawrence Kasdan to do re-writes on the screenplay, and the film was dedicated to Brackett posthumously.**



Long before her seminal work on *Empire*, Brackett was a stand-out woman in an industry dominated by men. Brackett made a highly successful career out of writing some of Hollywood's most famous films, many of which were notable for their tough-guy roles. Her big break came in 1945 when her first novel, *No Good From a Corpse*, so impressed film director Howard Hawks that he hired Brackett to adapt Raymond Chandler's crime novel *The Big Sleep* into a motion picture, starring Humphrey Bogart as detective Philip Marlowe. Brackett co-wrote the script with legendary author William Faulkner and Jules Furthman.

As rumor has it, Hawks initially mistook Leigh Brackett to be a man when he first read her novel (her first name could, after all, be that of a man). Hawks admired Brackett's "Chandleresque" style and had his secretary set up a meeting with this "Brackett guy." After the initial shock wore off that this pulp fiction writer was a woman, he hired Brackett anyway, and *The Big Sleep* stands as one of the great noir films of all time.

Hawks and Brackett would collaborate on four more pictures together, all starring John Wayne—*Rio Bravo* (1959), *Hatari!* (1963), *El Dorado* (1967), and *Rio Lobo* (1970), Hawks' last project.

Brackett went on to adapt a second Chandler novel into a film—*The Long Goodbye* (1973), directed by Robert Altman and this time starring Elliot Gould as the famed private eye Philip Marlowe. Her next screenplay, *The Empire Strikes Back*, would sadly be her last.

Brackett also wrote for television. Her credits include episodes of the series *Checkmate* and *Suspense*. She also wrote the teleplay *Terror at Northfield* for the *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* series.

In addition to her film and television work, Brackett was a celebrated author of 20 novels and numerous short stories. Her major work was in the field of science and fantasy fiction—for which she wrote over 200 titles. Her first short story, *Martian Quest*, sold to *Astounding Science Fiction* magazine in 1940, and she became a regular contributor to *Planet Stories* alongside Ray Bradbury (*Fahrenheit 451*).

Born in Los Angeles in 1915, Leigh Douglass Brackett married in 1946 fellow sci-fi writer Edmond Hamilton (1904-1977), known for his many stories of an imperiled Earth that was always saved from destruction in the final chapter. Brackett, herself, specialized in planetary romances and sword and sorcery tales, such as *The Sword of Rhiannon* (1953). She was also known for her series of adventures set on Mars with a character named Eric John Stark.

Among her many literary achievements, Brackett was the recipient of the Jules Verne Fantasy award in 1957 and the 1963 Spur Award for Best Western Novel for *Follow the Free Wind*. She was honored after her death in 1981 with a Hugo award for her literary contributions to science fiction.

Given the fact that she co-wrote *The Big Sleep*, it is perhaps not that surprising that Brackett is revered for her writing in the crime genre. Bill Pronzini, author of *Hardboiled*, considers Brackett, "one of the top hardboiled writers of all time." Her books include the acclaimed suspense novels *The Tiger Among Us* and *An Eye for an Eye*. This latter novel became the basis for the TV series *Markham*.

Many of Brackett's stories featured protagonists bent on cleaning up a crooked town and men trying to find renewed meaning in their lives. *The Empire Strikes Back* certainly strikes those same chords, and despite the fact that Brackett has been gone for 22 years, her distinct work lives on and will continue to inspire generations to come. ●



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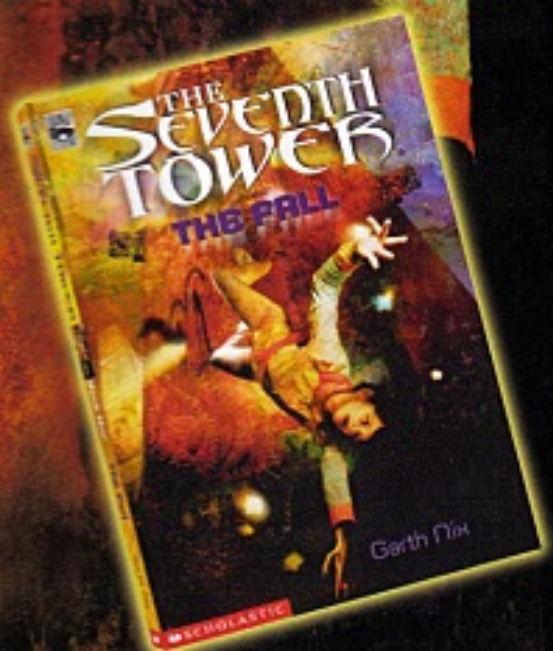
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**"APOLOGY ACCEPTED, CAPTAIN NEEDA":** Vader's dialogue in *Empire* is cold and crisp.

them and they needed help. It was pretty astounding.

**DID YOU FEEL A LOT OF PRESSURE TO PROVE YOURSELF?**

You know, I had been struggling for so long, that I didn't. I thought I belonged there. I thought they needed me, I thought I was good, and I was delighted and impressed to be working with them. I didn't feel out of place.

**WHAT WAS THE WRITING PROCESS LIKE WITH *EMPIRE*? IRVIN KERSHNER SAID HE SPENT A LOT OF TIME IN STORY CONFERENCES WITH YOU AND GEORGE.**

It was happening very fast. They were far along on the pre-production, they had to get started, and they needed a script. They were already building the monsters and stuff. But it was so much fun. I had just done some really hard, heavy lifting with *Raiders*, where I was on my own for six months and really had just an outline from George and Steven, and had to go off and write this whole thing by myself.

But with *Empire*, George had the whole story in his head. It was really a question of getting the script done, and getting Kersh in agreement. So they were very intense, highly adrenalized, fun sessions with George and Kersh, and then I would go away and write, and in two weeks we'd come back and look at the new draft. I wrote it really fast.

**WAS IT DIFFERENT WITH *RETURN OF THE JEDI*?**

It was similar—except I had already directed *Body Heat*, I was about to direct *The Big Chill*, and I wasn't writing for anyone else anymore. But George had been really helpful to me, and

**"THE FUN THING ABOUT *EMPIRE* IS THAT IN THE SECOND ACT YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND TIME SETTING THINGS UP—IT'S ALREADY SET UP."**

he said, "Will you do me this favor? I really need your help." Richard Marquand was already involved, and we had a very similar sort of situation—very intense. George had written the previous draft, and we did it really quick, with Richard, and nailed it down.

**WHAT WAS THE HARDEST PART OF JUMPING INTO *EMPIRE*?**

The intense time pressure. But it was much easier to do what George wanted on *Empire* than it was with *Raiders*, where I really created so much of the stuff. *Raiders* was much more contentious, the three of us trying to figure out what stayed and what went, what we could afford to do. But on *Empire* I was just trying to make it happen for him.

**WHEN YOU FINISHED THE SCRIPTS FOR *EMPIRE*, *JEDI*, OR *RAIDERS*, WAS THAT THE END OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT, OR WERE YOU ON THE SET RE-WRITING?**

No. I visited *Empire* just for fun. I never visited *Raiders*, because I was making *Body Heat* at that time. I don't think I ever visited *Jedi*.

**DID YOU HAVE A FAVORITE *STAR WARS* CHARACTER TO WRITE FOR?**

Writing Yoda was fun, as you can imagine. And isn't that when Boba Fett comes in? There's so many characters, it's impossible for me to even remember who came in where or when.

**YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR INTRODUCING A NUMBER OF NEW CHARACTERS, INCLUDING FETT AND YODA, AS WELL AS LANDO AND THE EMPEROR. WERE YOU GIVEN MORE FREEDOM WITH THESE NEW CHARACTERS, SINCE THE OTHERS WERE ALREADY ESTABLISHED?**

No—because even the main characters were pretty wide open. You can describe their characters in one sentence, but that doesn't tell you what they're going to say. Also, there were surprises all through the three movies in terms of what their relationships were, so everything was pretty much wide open.

The way it worked with George was he wanted me to write everything, and then if he had a problem, he'd tell me. He used to flip through the pages, and he wouldn't say anything. So finally I said, "What's the deal, man?" He says, "Oh, I forgot to tell you: I won't tell you anything unless I have a problem with it." I say, "Well, how about just telling me when you real-

ly love something? I'd like that."

But that's the way we operated together—if he had a problem, he would tell me, and otherwise he would just let it go. I made him compliment me occasionally. He's fun to work with—I mean, I wound up writing three movies for him, and it was mainly fun.

**WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION WHEN GEORGE FIRST SAID, "OK, I WANNA MAKE DARTH VADER LUKE'S FATHER?"**

It made perfect sense in that kind of a story. Most movies are about this same issue—*Grand Canyon* is about it. It's about how part of you wants to follow your desires, and the other part wants to do what's right and responsible. And one side is the dark side, and the other is the light side. Every one of us faces it every day. We live certain kinds of lives in the light of day, and at night all our fears come out. That's what most art is about.

**WERE YOU ALWAYS A WRITER?**

There was a lot of writing in my family. My mother and father had both wanted to write, but neither of them had actually followed through, and they were frustrated by it. But in the house, writing was considered a real thing, which was half the battle—I got the idea when I was very young that it was a legitimate thing to be a writer. I began writing in grade school, and then when I was 13, I saw *Lawrence of Arabia*. I was already mad for the movies, but when I saw *Lawrence of Arabia*, I thought, "This is what I want to do with my life."

**DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO DIRECT, OR DID THAT DEVELOP LATER?**

I always wanted to direct. I mean, I just wanted to make movies. I liked writing, but I wanted to have total control of the movies. And that's what I set out to do.

**IN ADDITION TO *EMPIRE*, *JEDI*, AND *RAIDERS*, YOU'VE MADE COMEDIES, DRAMAS, WESTERNS, FILM NOIR—IS THERE ANY TYPE OF MOVIE YOU HAVEN'T DONE YET THAT YOU WANT TO DO?**

I want to do a thriller, and a flat out action picture. I'm writing a thriller now.

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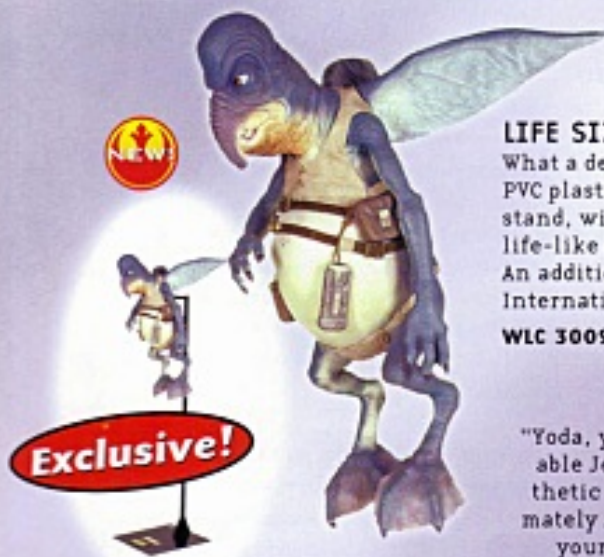
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## "I REALLY FEEL WHAT I SAID, WHICH IS THAT I THINK GEORGE SHOULD MAKE STAR WARS MOVIES—AND NO ONE ELSE."

It didn't register, whatever push it had. It made absolutely no impression on anybody. They couldn't figure out how to sell it at all. It was the wrong studio to release the movie, and they didn't have a clue what to do with it. That happens a lot. It's a very tricky time in the movies. Nobody has ever known what's going to work, but this fall, wonderful movies did no business. Some good ones did OK. It turned out to be a good year for the movies when it looked like it wouldn't be. But a movie like *The Insider*, which is terrific, you can't get people to go see it. A movie like *Being John Malkovich*, which is terrific, they're ecstatic because it does \$22 million. There are 40 movies that flopped since June that were good movies. They just couldn't find an audience.

I don't know anymore. I used to think I knew. But it's always been unpredictable. It's hard to get good ones made, but it's always been hard. I'm not sure it's changed all that much. It's much harder to get people of my generation to come out to the theater when they have so many options at home. So movies tend to be aimed at very young people, because they're the ones that go every week. So for a movie like *Mumford* or *The Insider*, it's hard to move that audience. Most studio executives are already terrified every waking moment, so they're going to be very reluctant to do anything that seems scary. Yet some very scary stuff has worked, so it's a confusing time, but good—it's usually good when there's chaos.

### DID YOUR DEPICTION OF THE MOVIE INDUSTRY IN *GRAND CANYON* COME FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE?

Definitely. That's an example, because that movie made about \$35 million and it was successful. But today, I'm not sure if we would have done any better than *Mumford*. That was only eight years ago, but people were still going out to see a movie like that.

You know, when I made *The Big Chill*, none of those people were stars. The movie was a huge hit. But that was because it had some time to grow—it never had a huge week-end ever, but it played for six months. That can't happen now. It's a very intense marketplace. You can barely hold your theaters for two weeks if you don't come on strong. That didn't used to be the situation. That means movies have to hit instantly. So a high concept movie, if it has any appeal, is going to make a

lot of money, and make it fast. But if the thing is a little more difficult to get ahold of, like *Mumford* or *Insider* or *Cider House Rules*, it's not a hit.

### DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING THE BIG CHILL MADE TODAY?

Yeah, I think so. I had a hard, terrible time getting it made then.

### IS THERE ANY MOVIE YOU'VE ORIGINATED YOURSELF THAT YOU HAVEN'T HAD A TOUGH TIME GETTING MADE?

*Body Heat* was pretty easy. I had just written *Raiders* and *Empire*, and Alan Ladd, Jr. said he would let me direct my movie. So that was not that hard. I've had easy times, hard times—you never know.

### YOU RECENTLY PRODUCED *HOME FRIES*. WHY PRODUCE A MOVIE THAT YOU'RE NOT DIRECTING?

I produced *The Bodyguard*, too, which I wrote. It was enormously successful, but I wasn't happy with the movie. It's very frustrating—producing and not liking what you do exactly. It's harder for a director-producer than it is for other people because you don't want to step on the toes of the director. It's a mixed bag, producing. I'm very reluctant to do it.

### YOU'VE STARTED ACTING NOW, TOO.

Yeah, I have. I just can't get hired as much as I want. Acting's a great scam!

### SURE IS. HOW DID YOU END UP PLAYING JACK NICHOLSON'S THERAPIST IN *AS GOOD AS IT GETS*?

I've known [writer-director] James L. Brooks for years. He just called me up and said that he saw me doing it. I think someone must have dropped out. But it was fun to find myself acting alone with Jack Nicholson. I'd do it any day.

### HOW DID YOU LIKE THE NEXT TWO INDIANA JONES FILMS AFTER *RAIDERS*?

I like ours the best. The spirit of it is the best. It's the most original. I'm proud of it.

### *RAIDERS* IS COMING UP ON A 20TH ANNIVERSARY AS WELL.

Yeah—everything is. Both my kids are more than 20 now, and that's shocking to me.

### WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE LATEST *STAR WARS* FILM?

I thought it was exactly what it should have

been—it was all George. Since THX he's really been interested in the same things, and when other people come into the mix, those things are there, but they're diluted. That's sometimes for the best—*Empire* is a really good movie because Kershner's a really good director. Having me write those three movies had a big effect on them. But having George do the whole thing on *Phantom Menace* is great because you get to see all his stuff—the hot rods, the thing about parents, everything. I dug it. I'd been dying for him to direct again.

### DID YOU EVER HAVE ANY DESIRE TO DIRECT A *STAR WARS* MOVIE YOURSELF?

I really feel what I said, which is that I think George should make *Star Wars* movies—and no one else.

### 20 YEARS LATER, WHAT STRIKES YOU MOST ABOUT *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*?

It has a quality that I think Kersh gave it. Kersh is so odd, and so wonderful. It's just not like any of the others. I really loved Richard Marquand. But he didn't put as distinctive a stamp—*Jedi* was a much tougher movie to pull off, because everything has to work out so hunky-dory. But I think Kersh just directed *Empire* great. He loosened up George in a lot of ways. George wanted the movie to be his, the way he wanted, but he knew how to use Kersh and trust him—even though it scared George at times. I thought Kersh just did a great job, and it's not like the other three movies.

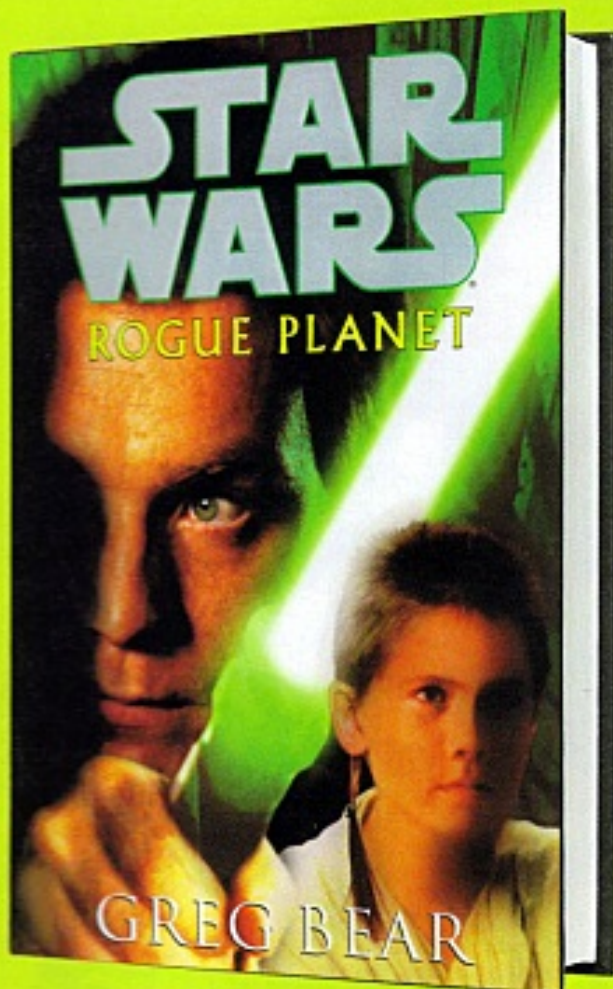
### WHAT MAKES IT UNIQUE FROM THE OTHER EPISODES?

It's the fun part of the story. When George made *Star Wars*, he didn't know if he'd ever make another. When he got the chance, he was in the good part of the story, and he was very free. He'd had the biggest success in history. This movie was going to be gigantic, and it was. So everybody sort of loosened up. And that's where all the fun comes from. It's gritty—Kershner had a huge impact on the way it looked. It looked better than *Star Wars*: it's shot better, it's lit better, the effects are better. George can tell you. So it has a much better look, and you're letting the characters do much more interesting stuff.

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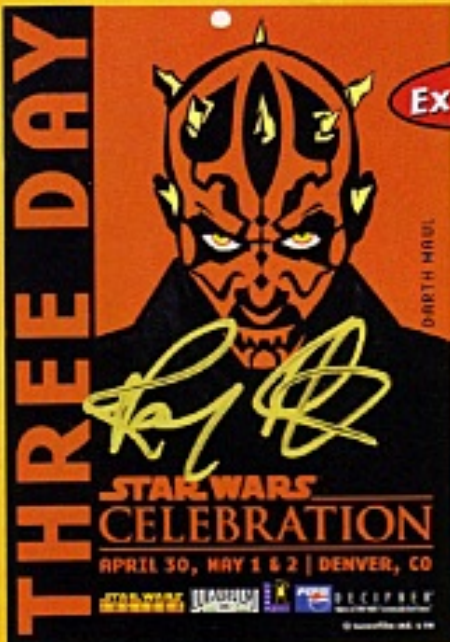
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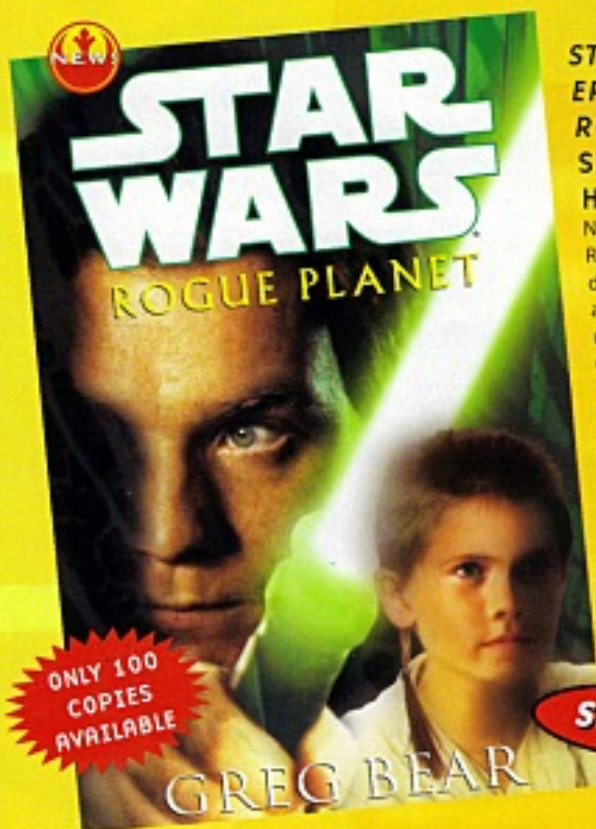
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# LANDO CALRISSIAN

AN ALL-NEW INSIDER INTERVIEW BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

## BILLY DEE WILLIAMS

"LANDO'S VERY MUCH WHO I AM—A ROMANTIC GUY, BUT THERE'S ALSO AN ABSURDITY ABOUT HIM..."

**ENIGMATIC, MERCURIAL, ROMANTIC**—Lando Calrissian was all of these things and more. From the first time we hear his name ("The Lando System?"—"Lando's not a system, he's a man") and his first moments onscreen in *The Empire Strikes Back*, when he greets Han with a tense but playful ruse, Lando was instantly branded as something new to the *Star Wars* universe: a character who wasn't immediately recognizable as either good or evil. Instead, Lando was something in between—could we trust him? Did we have any choice?

In many ways, caped lothario Lando Calrissian was the perfect role for Billy Dee Williams—sometimes, it's difficult to tell where Lando ends and Billy Dee begins. Although his career began with serious stage drama and work in acclaimed projects like the landmark TV-movie *Brian's Song*, Williams broke through in 1972 opposite Diana Ross in *Lady Sings the Blues*, and from there began to craft the romantic hero image that reached its pinnacle with *Empire* and *Return of the Jedi*. Before long, Williams was trading on that image by donning a tuxedo for a series of famous Colt 45 malt liquor commercials and even a season of TV's *Dynasty*.

This fall, he takes it a step further, into self-parody, in *Ladies Man*, the feature film based on Tim Meadows' *Saturday Night Live* sketch. He also appears in the new Nashville Network series *18 Wheels of Justice*, forming an unlikely trio with model Lucky Vanous and convicted Watergate felon-turned-actor G. Gordon Liddy. But he also appears in the new film *The Visit*, a serious drama—and a return to his roots.

Indeed, beyond the debonair mustache lies the soul of an artist (he's a lifelong painter who just opened an online gallery of his work at [bdwworl-dart.com](http://bdwworl-dart.com)), a gritty actor (*Nighthawks*, *Batman*), a jazz enthusiast (he's honorary chairman of the Thelonious Monk Jazz Institute in Washington, D.C.), father of two (his daughter is 26, his son 39), and a serious man. When we last interviewed Williams (*Insider* #38), he described himself as a brooder in search of inner peace—but two years later, Williams, now 63, says he's embarking on a fresh start, and sounds newly revitalized.

But Billy Dee will always be Billy Dee, and talking to him is enough to make you feel like you're soaring above Bespin with him. Like Lando Calrissian himself, Billy Dee Williams truly belongs here with us among the clouds.



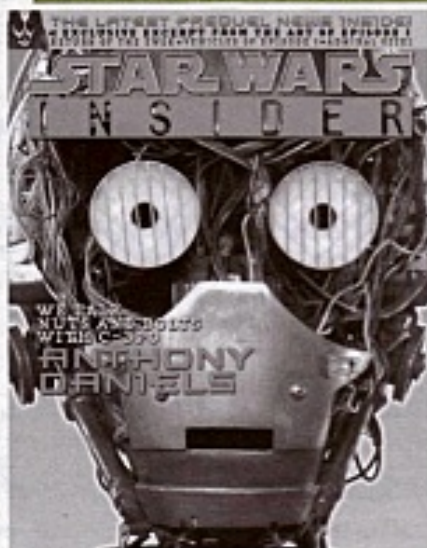
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**IF YOU WERE DESCRIBING LANDO CALRISSIAN FOR SOMEBODY WHO HAD NEVER SEEN THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?**

Lando is a guy who belongs to the future. He's a guy that has transcended all of the questions and dilemmas that we face, the usual antiquated ideas about what a person is and what a person should be. Lando's beyond all that.

**IF LANDO WERE IN CHARGE OF THE UNIVERSE, HOW WOULD IT BE DIFFERENT?**

It'd be a mess. I always saw him as a rather flamboyant person with grandiose ideas. He's quite a showman, quite flamboyant.

**IT'S FITTING THAT HE LIVED AMONG THE CLOUDS, BECAUSE HE SEEMED TO HAVE AN ALMOST ETHERAL QUALITY.**

Oh, absolutely—it was designed that way. But I realized that, and I thought it was great. I recognized the fact that the whole movie was on different levels. I mean, there was a cartoonish kind of thing going, a mythological thing going. It had a lot of elements, and I just tried to play around with it as much as I could.

**DID LUCAS OR KERSHNER TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF LANDO BEFORE YOU STARTED?**

Not really. They pretty much let me do what I wanted to do. I think I hit it. I had a good, intelligent understanding of the character.

**DID YOU THINK A LOT ABOUT LANDO, OR DID YOU JUST NATURALLY GET HIM?**

Well, I don't know if you naturally get something. You have to think about it. I did think about it a lot. I really wanted to make a dashing guy. And I was perfect for it—nobody else could've done it, not the way I did it.

**THAT'S FOR SURE. LANDO WAS SUCH AN ENIGMATIC CHARACTER IN EMPIRE. IT WAS HARD TO TELL WHETHER HE WAS A GOOD GUY OR BAD GUY.** That's what makes the character more interesting. I've done paintings of him, as a matter of fact, and two of them are hanging in Vegas right now. I did this painting of him tossing a royal flush card, because he's a rogue and gambler.

**ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT LANDO IN EMPIRE IS HIS SUAVE SIDE, HOW HE'S ALWAYS TRYING TO WOO PRINCESS LEIA.** Yeah, he's a charmer.

**DID THAT QUALITY COME FROM YOU OR THE SCRIPT?**

Well, I'm a natural born charmer. It's in my blood. I was an adorable child, so I learned how



**BETRAYAL:** Lando and Han eye each other warily in the carbon-freezing chamber.

to charm my way through life, but with a lot of fun. I don't take myself that seriously.

**IN RETURN OF THE JEDI, A LOT OF LANDO'S MYSTERY AND ROMANCE WERE MUTED, AND THE CHARACTER SEEMED MORE CLEAR CUT THAN IN EMPIRE.**

In the second one, I did become a part of the group, and certainly George had to resolve the whole situation, so everything else became secondary, or a part of trying to resolve the saga of Luke Skywalker's dilemma.

**WERE YOU DISAPPOINTED BY THAT?**

I always wanted Lando to do more. There is a lot more to Lando, if you look at those books about him. Lando's a great character—he's great for any premise. The character lends itself to all kinds of wonderful, exciting adventures.

**WERE YOU ONE OF MANY ACTORS IN THE RUNNING FOR LANDO, OR DID THEY APPROACH YOU SPECIFICALLY BECAUSE YOU WERE HOT AT THE TIME?**

That's pretty much what happened. Irv Kershner came to my house, and we sat and talked. We found out that we were both interested in Buddhism and eastern philosophy. Of course, a lot of that's in the movie. It was a very good meeting and he decided he wanted me to play Lando.

**DID YOU HAVE ANY TREPIDATION ABOUT DOING A SEQUEL AND JOINING THIS FRANCHISE?**

No, of course not—are you kidding? You don't even have to ask. It was a great opportunity, and just to work with George Lucas—because I remember quite vividly that I was really excited about his first film, *THX 1138*, when I saw it many years before.

I was really excited about Lando. I mean,

the whole idea of wearing a cape was so exciting to me. I had never done anything like that.

**WAS IT TOUGH JOINING THIS ALREADY ESTABLISHED TRIO AND MAKING IT MORE OF A QUARTET?**

Well, if you go in with a smile on your face and good thoughts and enthusiasm, everything's going to be fine. Because the whole idea is to relax everybody. When people come together for the first time, you ease into a situation, but I usually try to jump in. At that time, I was a lot more shy and less garrulous than I am now. There were those uneasy moments, but I don't even remember what they were—everything worked out just great. We made friends, that's all.



**PAYBACK:** Chewbacca won't let Calrissian off the hook so easily.



**WHAT DID LANDO BRING TO THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK THAT WAS MISSING FROM STAR WARS?**

Well, color. Another hue. A little bit more texture. And it certainly made a statement that there are some of us who are going to be out there in space.

**IS LANDO THE ROLE YOU'RE MOST IDENTIFIED WITH?**

Well, that certainly is one of the characters everybody identifies me with—and whenever that happens, that means I was very successful in creating the character. But there certainly are other characters people always associate me with, like the *Lady Sings the Blues* character, *Brian's Song*, even *Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings*.

**HAD YOU EVER WORKED WITH SPECIAL EFFECTS BEFORE EMPIRE?**

Not on that scale, no. The exciting thing is that you had to use your imagination a lot. You really had to explore your imagination, and that's always good practice for an actor. So much of it depends on your belief in your environment. You really have to believe when you do those characters, you really have to get your head into it. You can't approach it halfheartedly. You have to be completely, totally into it, and believe it.



**WE HAVE AN INTERVIEW THIS ISSUE WITH YOUR BINGO LONG TEAMMATE, JAMES EARL JONES.**

That's my pal—I love him. He's a wonderful human being. We had a great time on *Bingo Long*. I used to kiss him on the forehead every morning. That was my greeting to him. The first time we worked together was on stage, in a play called *The Cool World*. He played my older brother. It was 1960, and I remember how wonderful he was then, and how wonderfully sensitive he is. He has a great, wonderful vulnerability for a big man. You know, it's generally the nicest guys in the world who can be the best villains. I think he can play any kind of character.

**HOW DID YOU LIKE WORKING WITH IRVIN KERSHNER?**

Kershner understands the eternal struggle. I enjoyed him very much. He really knows actors. He's a teacher. He's a real eccentric, and an interesting individual. He's very whimsical, very bright, very quick, with a lot of energy.

**IT SEEMS LIKE THE UNIFYING TRAIT THAT COMES THROUGH ALL YOUR CHARACTERS IS ONE OF SUPREME CONFIDENCE.**

Yeah, but that's my life. I come from that kind of background, that kind of family. I haven't had too many boots stepping on me, or at least I won't allow it, but when it does happen, I just move on. I go in another direction. But that's because I was raised that way. I come from a family of very confident people, people filled with great self esteem.

**HOW IS LANDO DIFFERENT FROM BILLY DEE?**

Well, Lando's very much who I am. I tried to make Lando a romantic guy, but there's also an absurdity about Lando, and that's how I see myself. I see myself as a walking absurdity, and I find it really quite amusing.

**YOU'VE DESCRIBED YOURSELF BEFORE AS "A BROODER."**

Yeah, well, I've stopped brooding now. I've given up brooding. I don't find it as romantic anymore. There's no romance in brooding, so I don't want to brood anymore. I'm teaching myself to enjoy myself. I've gone through a lot in the last few years, and my life has changed. The people I'd surrounded myself with for so many years are no longer in my life, so I'm



## "SOMETIMES AS PEOPLE AGE, THEY ALLOW THEMSELVES TO SORT OF FADE AWAY. I LOVE LIFE TOO MUCH TO WANT TO DO THAT."

embarking upon a whole new adventure. I feel like I'm more in touch with myself now. For a long time, I lost touch with myself.

I needed to get in touch with myself in a way that I hadn't been—just one on one, me and me. Getting older, it becomes one of the byproducts of one's journey. It's a juncture, and

and we started collaborating already. Beautiful woman.

**FOR A MAN WHO ONCE HAD HIS OWN AVON "FRAGRANCE," IT'S ALMOST SHOCKING THAT YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY WRITTEN A ROMANCE NOVEL.**

I love Romanticism. I think Sinatra was the last

### HOW DO YOU DEFINE ROMANTICISM?

Well, you have to go back to Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo, who really created it. It's chivalry. It's swashbuckling. It's dueling. It's courting. It's poetic, but with an edge to it.

### YET YOU SPOOFED YOUR OWN ROMANTIC IMAGE



you don't want to fade. Sometimes as people age, they allow themselves to sort of fade away. I love life too much to want to do that. I have too many things I want to do to do that. I won't allow myself to do that. So if I have bad habits, I counter it with good habits.

**THE LAST TIME I INTERVIEWED YOU, YOU SAID YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF MORE OF A PAINTER THAN AN ACTOR.**

Well, I don't know—I'm an actor and I'm a painter. I don't know why I said that, at that moment.

**YOU WERE ALSO WRITING YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY. BUT INSTEAD YOU RELEASED A NOVEL, PSI-NET, WHICH YOU CO-WROTE WITH INDIANA JONES AUTHOR ROB MACGREGOR.**

The autobiography's just about finished, but I wanted to come up with a character for a television series or movie, and I thought it would be a very good idea to try to do a thriller. Rob and I spent a lot of time on the telephone, with email, faxing stuff. It's the way I'm going to work with this young woman I'm doing my next novel with, a romance novel. Her name is Elizabeth Atkins-Bowman, and she already has a book out called *White Chocolate*. I just met her the other day for the first time,

vestige of Romanticism. You know, it's a different world we're living in today. We're products of cyberspace. It's no longer about human beings. So much is about technology—and technology is devoid of romance.



### JOINING THE TEAM

A 1990 *People* magazine cover heralds the arrival of Billy Dee in the *Star Wars* universe. Con man, gambler, scoundrel—they liked him.

**IN THE NEW MOVIE LADIES MAN, AND IN A RECENT EPISODE OF THE HUGHLEYS, THAT'S A COMPLIMENT TO HOW STRONGLY YOU'VE SUCCEEDED WITH THAT IMAGE.**

[Laughing] *The Hughleys* created these lines that had nothing to do with Romance, but the whole idea was that however I say it, it's going to be Romantic. And in *The Ladies Man*, I play the *Ladies Man*'s mentor.

**YOUR OTHER NEW FILM, THE VISIT, IS DIFFERENT—IT'S MUCH MORE SERIOUS, RIGHT?**

Yes, it's a wonderful, very powerful, very spiritual movie about a family. It's about a boy who's in prison and dying of AIDS, and his relationship with his family and friends. I play the father. It's one of the best characters I've ever done.

**IT SOUNDS LIKE A RETURN TO SOME OF YOUR EARLIER, MORE DRAMATIC WORK.**

Yeah, that's the whole thing. I got stuck with the Romantic thing, which is really great for me, and it pioneered a whole point of view that never existed before. But on the other hand, I'm an actor. I started on the stage. I'm a character actor, and I love doing characters.

**YOU SEEM TO ALWAYS BE ACTING, PAINTING, WRITING, CREATING—ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD.**





**REGRET:** Lando comes face-to-carbonized-face with the friend he knows he must now help save.

**HOW DO YOU DO IT? WHAT'S YOUR SECRET?**

I'm scared to death.

**SCARED OF WHAT?**

I'm scared of not being alive, not really being alive. I don't like being idle—I like being busy, and I like creating. Also legacy is very important to me. Being a historic figure and leaving a good legacy are very important to me.

**WHAT ARE YOUR INSPIRATIONS?**

Everything, everybody. You are. Everything affects me.

**WHY DO YOU THINK STAR WARS HAS INSPIRED SO MANY PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS?**

It's epic. It's life. It's mythology. It has everything that most of us are concerned with in terms of religion, spiritual matters, good and

**DO YOU STILL GET LETTERS ABOUT LANDO?**

Every day, letters pile in from all over the world. Germany, Italy, England, all over America, Canada, Yugoslavia, Switzerland. Everywhere.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY LANDO MEMORABILIA OR ACTION FIGURES?**

Oh, yes, I have some action figures—and I have an Ewok head. I talked George into giving me one.

**ONE OF THE ACTUAL MASKS? HOW'D YOU TALK HIM INTO THAT?**

I said, "Could I have this?" And he looked at me for about 10 seconds, and he said, "OK," and gave it to me. So I have that. I have a lot of the T-shirts and stuff from when the company was called "Blue Harvest," and I have stuff from when the original title of *Return of the Jedi* was "Revenge of the Jedi." You have to collect this stuff—you cannot go through life not having this stuff. It's a fantastic moment in cinema history.

**JUST TO HAVE ACTION FIGURES OF YOURSELF MUST BE AMAZING.**

Oh, yeah, it's great. Listen, how many people in this life have had these kinds of experiences? I was one of the fortunate ones. ☉

**"IT'S NO LONGER ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS. SO MUCH IS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY—AND TECHNOLOGY IS DEVOID OF ROMANCE."**

**DO YOU FEEL ART HELPS YOU BE MORE TRULY ALIVE?**

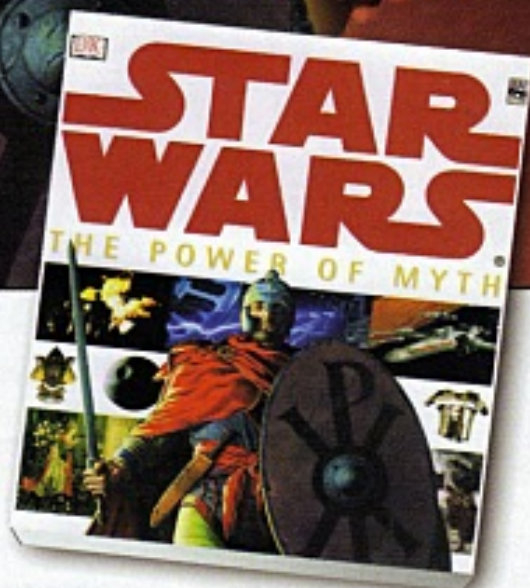
Creativity, yes. I don't see why one should ever live without creative interests. I think it's an incredible, wonderful balance in one's life. I have a twin sister, and we were talking one day, and I said, "You were a straight-A student all through school, and I wasn't. That always intimidated me, and I always felt stupid around you." She said, "No, you weren't stupid. You were just in another world, daydreaming."

evil—all of the things we find ourselves faced with in this journey we're taking.

I think *Empire* is the best. It's questioning the dark side, and it brings the experience to a point where you have to decide which direction it's all going to go—who's going to win, who's going to lose. Production-wise, story-wise, it is the best. It looked better than all the others. I think about it every now and again, and I think it was a comfortable place to be, between the first and the last.

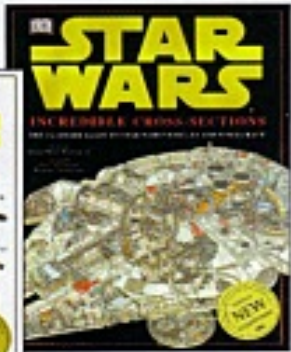
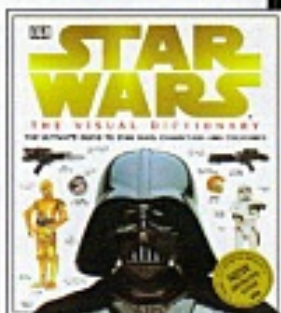
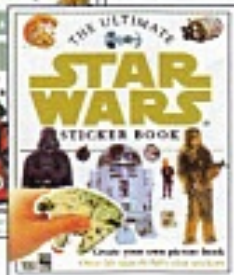
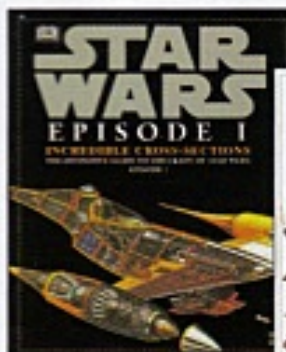


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# DARTH VADER

AN INSIDER EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

## JAMES EARL JONES: VOICE OF VADER

"MY JOB WAS TO TAKE ALL HUMANITY  
OUT OF DARTH VADER'S VOICE..."



HE POSSESSES PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS SPEAKING VOICE in American popular culture, a familiar bass filled with power, authority, and—at least in the *Star Wars* universe—menace. But in real life, James Earl Jones comes across as warm, reticent, and surprisingly vulnerable. In fact, it's just that combination that made Jones the perfect player to give voice to Darth Vader, the evil Sith Lord who has embraced the dark side but will ultimately prove unable to keep buried his true, human nature.

Some of Jones' vulnerability no doubt stems from his childhood as a nearly-mute stutterer, growing up in rural 1930s Mississippi. But the actor, now 69, is also a naturally nice guy (he calls himself "docile") who drew on his superior intellect to become one of America's most respected actors, both onscreen and off, overcoming his speech problems in a very big way. Whether starring as King Lear on the New York stage or intoning "This is CNN" on TV, Jones has morphed into a master of the spoken word.

On stage, he's starred on Broadway and Shakespeare in the Park. On film, he began his career as a young lieutenant in the 1964 Stanley Kubrick masterpiece *Dr. Strangelove* and went on to appear in dozens more films, from dramas (including *Field of Dreams*, *The Man*, *The Great White Hope*, *Matewan*, *Sommersby*, and *A Family Thing*) to comedies

(*Coming to America*, *Three Fugitives*, *Meteor Man*), from sleek action (*Sneakers*, *The Hunt for Red October*, and its two sequels, *Patriot Games* and *Clear and Present Danger*) to campy adventures (*Conan the Barbarian*, *Allan Quatermain and the Lost City of Gold*). His most recent film is *Fantasia/2000*, in which he's an onscreen host between the animation.

On television, Jones played Alex Haley in *Roots: The Next Generations*, did some soaps in the '60s, and starred in two acclaimed series during the '90s (*Under One Roof* and *Gabriel's Father*, also known as *Pros and Cons*). And in the recording booth, he's done myriad narrations, commercial voice-overs, animated characters (including Mufasa in Disney's *The Lion King* and its video sequel *Simba's Pride*), and, of course, a big guy in a black mask named Darth Vader—a role he may someday reprise in Episode III.

But for this special issue, we started with

Episode V, the movie in which Darth Vader firmly struck back—and boldly delivered one of cinema's most famous surprises.

**YOU WERE ONE OF THE ONLY PEOPLE TO READ THE EMPIRE SCRIPT REVEALING DARTH VADER AS LUKE'S FATHER. WHAT DID YOU THINK WHEN YOU FIRST SAW THAT?**

I thought I was lying! I thought Darth Vader was lying. I thought, "What a ploy." But it did deepen who Darth Vader was. So now in Episode I you get a young man who seems to be free of all evil, but you begin to wonder about certain energies.

**DID YOU ASK LUCAS IF DARTH VADER WAS LYING? OR WERE YOU LEFT TO SPECULATE LIKE THE REST OF US?**

Are you kidding? I didn't question anything! My job was just to read the lines.



**BUT END KNOWING THAT VADER WAS LUKE'S FATHER CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOKED AT DELIVERING THE REST OF YOUR LINES IN EMPIRE?**

No. The technique about recording that voice was to keep it within very strict boundaries of inflection, and there was no way to enlighten the voice with an awareness. In fact, my job was to keep awareness out of Darth Vader's voice—take all humanity out of it.

**OTHER THAN VADER'S INFAMOUS BREATHING NOISE (A BEN BURTT CREATION), WAS THERE ANY ELECTRONIC ALTERATION OF YOUR VOICE?**

No, I just kept it in a low register and a very narrow band of inflection. It was also important that he not sound like an American, particularly a black American—to keep it universal, like he could be from anywhere, any time.

**IT'S BECOME LEGEND THAT YOU SPENT JUST A FEW HOURS RECORDING YOUR LINES FOR STAR WARS. DID YOU WORK ANY LONGER ON THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK?**

That's sort of a running joke. The first episode, I spent an hour and a half, or maybe two-and-a-half hours on that. Because it was just a job. You know, "Read these words." And the second one, I think we spent a whole day on, just to try to figure what we had done right the first time. The third one, we spent three days—just for the hell of it, I think. It must have been to get me a little better salary! We sort of hung around there for a couple days. The job was quite simple, really. I think its success, if it is successful, was in its simplicity.

**IT'S FUNNY THAT FOR EMPIRE, YOU WERE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU DID RIGHT ON STAR WARS, BECAUSE THE FIRST TIME YOU WEREN'T THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT IT. WAS THERE A LOT MORE PRESSURE WHEN YOU CAME BACK TO DO EMPIRE?**

Well, naturally, I as an actor wanted to go in there and improve it—give it some humanity, some inflection. But then Lucas finally realized something. He said, "You know, I think the trick is not to give him any inflection, not to make him human."

**DID THAT CHANGE IN THE THIRD ONE, LIKE TOWARD THE END OF THE FILM WHEN YOU'RE GETTING CLOSER TO RENOUNCING THE DARK SIDE?**

No, the third one sort of confirmed it—confirmed that was the style and approach and technique to it.

**WHEN YOU WERE IN THOSE RECORDING SESSIONS, WOULD THEY BE PROJECTING FOOTAGE FROM THE FILM?**

Yes, but all I got was the large figure of Darth Vader, because of the mask. You didn't get much face language, you got just the presence.

**WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION OF STAR WARS THE FIRST TIME YOU WORKED ON IT?**

I didn't have much of an impression at all. It was a good stylized movie, and I like sci-fi stuff anyway. The idea of space ships is very attractive to me, ever since Jules Verne—unusual craft to take you to unusual places.

**DID YOU AUDITION FOR THE PART, OR DID YOU JUST SHOW UP ONE DAY AND START READING?**

My agent got a call saying, "Would Jimmy like to do a day's work in a sound studio?" I was out of work then, like actors often are, so the answer was of course yes. I found out later that apparently Lucas had considered other actors—I think the name Orson Welles was invoked, although I'm not sure if he was asked or not. But Lucas knew he needed a bass voice and not a tenor.

**SO THERE WAS NO MEETING OR DISCUSSION BEFORE YOU STARTED?**

They asked if I wanted to do a day's work, and I said yes and showed up.

**AND PROBABLY DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT MUCH AFTER YOU LEFT?**

Oh, no.

**WERE YOU SURPRISED WHEN IT BECAME SUCH A SUCCESS?**

Yes, and I was very happy to be a part of it, even though I was just special effects, as much as the breathing was special effects. I take no major credit for the character.

**WELL, I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN ABOUT BEING JUST SPECIAL EFFECTS, BUT I THINK I SPEAK FOR MANY PEOPLE WHEN I SAY YOU WERE MORE THAN JUST EFFECTS. THAT YOU GAVE A TRULY GREAT PERFORMANCE.**

I think that performance is in your head. Vader is good proof that if you stay out of the way of a character, it'll come through. If you stay out of the way, good, effective dialogue will evoke in the viewer or listener all kinds of wonderful things that come out of the viewer's mind.

**DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE STAR WARS MOVIE?**

I'd say the first one, and I liked the new one very much. A lot of people wanted more of something that evoked the later Darth Vader in that child, but children are children. All we needed was the observation by the Jedi that this kid was special—how special, we don't know. And it was made for children—my son adored it, and that was enough for me.

**OK, SINCE YOU BROUGHT UP EPISODE I, LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE—WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EPISODES II AND III?**

All I know is they're looking for another Anakin Skywalker, a little bit older.



**COLD AS ICE:** Flanked by a fleet of snowtroopers, Vader hunts for the young Skywalker on Hoth.





JOIN ME: Anakin Skywalker reaches out to his son.

**WELL, I KNOW THAT, BUT YOU'VE BEEN QUOTED AS SAYING THAT YOU'LL BE RETURNING AS THE VOICE OF DARTH VADER. SPILL THE BEANS.**

I ran into George in Idaho a couple years ago, and I said, "Well, George, do I work?" He said, "Oh, yeah, you'll work maybe the last five minutes of Episode III."

**AND THAT'S AS FAR AS IT WENT?**

Yes, but that pleased me very much, to be a part of it in any way. It'll be after Darth goes bionic.

**IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VOICE ACTING AND PERFORMING ON CAMERA?**

You can freak out more with voice acting. You're not being embarrassed by how you look or what people might think of you. You're usually in a very private recording studio. You can go to extremes. You can experiment. You can really dare to fail.

I look back on some of the voice work I've done, and I'm surprised at how effective I could

be in a little animated movie we did called *The Flight of Dragons*. I was amazed at what my

**"APPARENTLY LUCAS HAD CONSIDERED OTHER ACTORS—I THINK THE NAME ORSON WELLES WAS INVOKED."**

voice was capable of, because I was freed up to do things that I don't ordinarily do, make sounds I don't ordinarily make, create sounds, create attitudes, moods, feelings—create feelings with sound. You want to sound like your voice is coming out of whatever the filmmaker has created—whether it's a lion, or a big guy with a mask on. It does liberate you.

If I may indulge you in a bit of culture for a moment, the Greeks, in their theater, wore masks, and behind the mask they were totally unselfconscious. The job of a Greek actor was to project across to the last row from behind

the mask. I think the mask liberates you to use your energies in a whole different way.

**BUT IN STAR WARS, YOU WEREN'T THE ONE ON THE SET WEARING THE MASK. HOW DO YOU VIEW THAT COLLABORATION OF SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE—DAVID PROWSE, BOB ANDERSON, SEBASTIAN SHAW, BEN BURTT—ALL CONTRIBUTING TO ONE CHARACTER?**

That's wonderful. That's the best part about moviemaking. It's all a collaboration, and it should be a collaboration. The best movies, I think, are collaborations where there's no central character. The movies I cherish most are those little independent movies like *Marewon* that had no stars. I was hired as a character actor.





**YOU'VE SPOKEN IN THE PAST ABOUT GROWING UP AS A STUTTERER. HOW MUCH DO YOU RELISH THE IRONY OF NOW HAVING THIS WHOLE SECOND ACTING CAREER THAT'S BASED UPON YOUR MASTERY OF YOUR VOICE?**

It's better than an irony—it's a wonderful victory.

I could have been happy as a mute. You learn how to listen a lot better, and you can clear your thinking up a little easier. There's a certain advantage, in a way, to being mute. You don't have any confrontations. You don't get into arguments because you can't, you're incapable of arguing. Even today, I have a hard time debating. When I talk sometimes, as I'm doing right now, I simply start talking off the top of my head, and that's not always where the kernel of my thoughts are. I have a very hard time because I'm not verbal, and I'm docile, I have a hard time holding forth extemporaneously.

**BUT YOU SEEM TO BE DOING A GREAT JOB TODAY.** This is different—this is a conversation, and the best interviews are just conversations.

**HOW DID YOU GET BEYOND YOUR STUTTERING PROBLEMS?**

When I got to high school, I had a teacher who discovered I was writing poetry on the sly, and one day he challenged me as to whether I was the author. In order to prove that I wrote it, I had to get up in front of the classroom and recite it—and I did without stuttering. So he used that as a way to regain for me my power of speech, to have me write poetry and read it to the class.

**DID ALREADY KNOWING THE WORDS GIVE YOU MORE CONFIDENCE THAN USUAL?**

Yes, I was very familiar with words, and I was very familiar with, by the way, Shakespearean characters, because I always read Shakespeare since an uncle introduced him to me. So I was kin to a lot of words that I hadn't ever said before, and I had an emotional relationship with words. I think it's the best thing an actor can have, more than an intellectual relationship. A simple word like want—"he wants, I want, you want"—to realize how much emotion is packed into that one word: "I want to live." The word want—it's a great word. So as a stutterer, as a mute, I had a fairly emotional relationship with all the words that I was aware of.

**IS THAT WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE POETRY?**

That I did for myself. It wasn't to ever show anybody. It was a way of expressing myself, just to myself. That, I think, is the nature of poetry.

**HOW DID YOU GO FROM BARELY SPEAKING TO OUTGOING ACTOR?**

It came in stages. I knew I wanted to be an actor shortly after I got out of the Army, but I had to go through a lot of amateur work before I knew I wanted to be a professional. I could've been happy being an amateur actor. I don't know what I would do for a living, but I would've been happy being the town actor. In the little village where I live, there are guys who don't bother to go to New York, they just wait for the next amateur production happening in the village and they're very good. They're quite content, and I think I would've been, too.

**DID YOU HAVE HEROES IN THE ACTING FIELD WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?**

No, I had no exposure. We were pretty much isolated farmers, and we didn't have electricity until I got out of high school. So radio was about the best we got in terms of communication. TV happened at a time when we barely got one channel clearly in black and white—

and I was not impressed much by that, because there wasn't anything to be impressed by.

**NOW THAT YOU'VE BECOME SO ACCOMPLISHED AS A VOICE-OVER ARTIST, DO THEY STILL DIRECT YOU, OR DO THEY JUST HAND YOU THE SCRIPT AND LET YOU GO?**

No, they direct me. I insist. I even insist on line readings.

**REALLY? SO IT WAS A DIRECTOR WHO SAID, "EMPHASIZE 'THIS IS CNN'—IT SOUNDS SO GRAVE THE WAY YOU SAY IT, I THINK THERE'S AN EMERGENCY HAPPENING."**

No, that one was quite an accident. I wasn't trying to be the gravest, but it just happened that way. But when they come to me each year to re-record it, maybe with some other phrases, I ask them for line readings, because I don't know what to do with it anymore.

**I THOUGHT MOST ACTORS RESENT HAVING A DIRECTOR TELL THEM EXACTLY HOW TO READ A SPECIFIC LINE.**

I know, and directors are often surprised that I ask for line readings. But it's often the quickest way they can convey what they want. Some directors cannot convey what they really mean, either with words or with a line reading, but usually the line reading is much easier for the actor to understand.

I was in a movie once with a bunch of stars, including Richard Burton and Liz Taylor, and I was the only one who asked for direction. It was assumed that the stars knew exactly what they were doing. They didn't. And the director was really avoiding confronting them. But I said I wanted direction, and I usually do, because I need to know how what I'm doing is fitting into the director's vision, and he's the only one who can tell me.





# CLIVE REVILL: VOICE OF THE EMPEROR

BY SCOTT CHERNOFF

The Force works in mysterious ways. One day, you're a working actor, and the next, you're the evil ruler of the entire galaxy—and nothing's ever the same again. At least, that's kind of the way it worked with Clive Revill, who performed the voice of the Emperor in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

"I'd done a film for Irvin Kershner called *A Fine Madness*," Revill told the *Insider*. "Then I got a call from Kershner, and he said, 'Listen, I want you to come down and read something.' I didn't have anything planned that day, so I went down to the recording studio. He showed me some clips, and he said, 'Read it and get some oomph in it.' So I read the stuff through, and gave it the oomph, and they tinkered around with it—and the result is that I get a lot of mail."

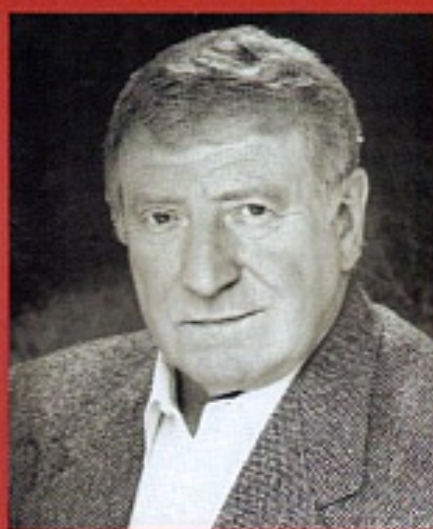
The mail comes because, while Ian McDiarmid played Emperor Palpatine in *Return of the Jedi* and his younger self in *The Phantom Menace*, Clive Revill was the first actor to portray the dark overlord—and he oozed with oomph.

"With Kershner," Revill said, "you had to keep the reins tight—you couldn't go overboard. It was the perfect example of the old adage 'less is more'—the Emperor doesn't say very much. But when he finally appears, it's at a point in the saga when everyone's waiting to see him. It's the Emperor, the arch villain of all time, and when he says there's a great disturbance in the Force, I mean, that's enough oomph!"

## "...HE SAID, 'READ IT AND GET SOME OOMPH IN IT'"

Still, Revill is reluctant to take too much credit for the character, which in *Empire* is seen only as a holographic image and was portrayed onscreen by an old woman wearing pale green makeup, with the eyes of a chimpanzee matted in to chilling effect.

"One's got to realize that I was barely involved," he said. "I was batting in the dark, because I hadn't read a script—it wasn't even available. There were just these lines. I don't wish to demean it, but I did it and left, and



that's it." In fact, Revill, who worked about 90 minutes, didn't even bother to see *Empire* when it was playing in theaters the first time. "It was just a day in the life of," he recalled.

At the time, Revill was a busy actor appearing in episodes of television shows like *Columbo*, *Magnum P.I.*, *Hart to Hart*, *Dynasty*, and *The Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries*, as well as the movies *The Little Prince and Zorro*, *The Gay Blade*. Before that, he worked extensively on the London stage (including a stint in the Royal Shakespeare Company and as Fagan in *Oliver*). But the roles came fast and furious after Revill, a New Zealand native, moved from

London to Los Angeles in 1977. More recent appearances include *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (the 1991 episode "Qpid"), *Babylon 5*, the 1989 sequel *C.H.U.D. II - Bud the Chud*, and two of Mel Brooks' latest, *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* and *Dracula: Dead and Loving It*.

In addition to the Emperor, Revill, 71, has lent his rich voice to everything from *Transformers* (he was Kickback in the TV show and feature film) to *Freakazoid!* He played Alfred in the pilot episode of *Batman: The*

*Animated Series*, moving on to another part before more episodes were ordered, and even took over the voice of *A New Hope*'s General Dodonna (originally played by the late Alex McCrindle) in the 1995 LucasArts game *Star Wars: TIE Fighter Collector's CD-ROM*.

But is the actor disappointed that his resumé doesn't include continuing the role of the Emperor in subsequent *Star Wars* films?

"No," he said, "because casting is an arcane business to say the least, and in all probability, they thought, 'Well, I suppose we could use him for Jedi, but Ian McDiarmid looks more like what we want.' So I'm left doodling around in outer space as a disembodied voice! But I've been in the business for 50 years, and I tend to take it all with a grain of salt—otherwise you go mad."

Still, Clive Revill—whose name contains the word *evil* twice—was clearly the right choice to give voice to the first incarnation of Emperor Palpatine, and his fans won't let him forget. "I was just down at the dentist this morning," he said, "and a very nice dental assistant started talking to me about voice work. I made sure she wasn't holding anything sharp, and I asked if she remembered a picture called *The Empire Strikes Back*. She said, 'Of course,' and I said, 'Well, I was the voice of the Emperor.' I thought she was going to faint. She couldn't have been much more than 19 or 20. She started to palpitate."

Who wouldn't start to palpitate upon meeting the original Palpatine? Forget the Force—this guy's got oomph. ☼



A combination of elements created *Empire*'s Emperor.



**YOUR FIRST MOVIE WAS ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVORITES, DR. STRANGELOVE. WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH KUBRICK, AND SLIM PICKENS?**

I rode home with Slim every night and I got to know him quite well, but there isn't much to say about a relationship with Kubrick, because I didn't have one. I think the only thing that happened between us was he said, "Why don't you know your lines?"

**YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOUR LINES?**

Well, there was a whole battery of technical sounds I was supposed to make. He decided to switch that on the set, and I wasn't prepared. He was really upset, because there weren't that many lines to learn.

**DID YOU HAVE ANY SENSE STRANGELOVE WAS GOING TO TURN OUT TO BE SOMETHING SPECIAL?**

Oh, no, but I think it's best that we don't know. If you don't know how successful you're going to be, you won't play the success, you'll play the job. I think anticipating success is the quickest way to kill a project.

**ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR MOST BELOVED FILMS IS FIELD OF DREAMS. YOU MUST HAVE SENSED SOMETHING SPECIAL IN THAT SCRIPT?**

Oh, that was a wonderful experience, totally. I class that as one of the small movies that I cherish, the same as I do *Marek*. Yes, Kevin Costner

"VADER IS GOOD PROOF THAT IF YOU STAY OUT OF THE WAY OF A CHARACTER, IT'LL COME THROUGH."

was a star, but everybody's energy counted in that movie. Everybody was important.

**WHY DID THAT FILM TOUCH SUCH A NERVE WITH PEOPLE?**

This story was so simple. It was about communion between father and son. Where the story went and where it was set—it was not about baseball, it was about communion.

**AND ISN'T THAT WHAT STAR WARS ENDED UP BEING ABOUT?**

You're right.



CLASH OF THE TITANS: Father vs. son, connecting the only way they can, in *Empire's* classic final duel.

**WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER IN FIELD OF DREAMS REPRESENT IN THAT JOURNEY?**

He was really a spirit force that happened to manifest himself in real life. When he goes into the cornfield, it tips you off that he really is from that world. He just happened to intrude into life a bit more strongly through Ray's obsession. He and Doc Graham were surrogate fathers until Ray met his real father. He was just there to help shape his path to his real father.

**SPEAKING OF FATHERS, THE LION KING WAS ANOTHER MAJOR BLOCKBUSTER FOR YOU. WAS IT SIMILAR TO STAR WARS IN THAT YOU JUST WORKED A COUPLE OF DAYS?**

I think the actors spent about two years on that film, but not consistently. We'd be called in for a few days work every few months. The film itself took about four years for the animators to put together. I was very proud to be a part of it, because it meant a lot to a generation of children.

**YOU'VE DONE ALL THREE OF THE JACK RYAN MOVIES BASED ON TOM CLANCY'S BOOKS. TWO WITH HARRISON FORD. IS ADMIRAL GREER A FUN ROLE FOR YOU?**

Oh, it's so great to have 10 lines in a movie and be considered a co-star! It's the character, Admiral Greer, who is the co-star. You don't think of Jack Ryan without thinking of Admiral Greer. I think Harrison did something very interesting. He dealt with Greer not as an admiral, but as a friend. In the first episode (with Alec Baldwin, before Ford took over the Ryan character), you got a feeling that Greer knew Jack's wife's father, who was also an admiral,

but that was not explored. Harrison dealt with me differently. He started getting very simple. When he was around me, he dealt with the folksy world.

**HAD YOU WORKED BEFORE WITH FORD—OR ANY OTHER STAR WARS ACTORS—IN POST-PRODUCTION ON ANY OF THE STAR WARS FILMS?**

No, I was alone. I didn't meet any of the stars of *Star Wars*. I finally met Mark Hamill when he was doing a play on Broadway and I was doing a play on Broadway. We went to lunch one day.

**I IMAGINE THERE MUST BE, LIKE, A GIANT TRUCK THAT PULLS UP AND DROPS OFF A HUGE PILE OF FAN LETTERS AT YOUR HOUSE EVERY DAY. DO YOU GET A LOT OF FAN MAIL?**

I do, and I answer it all. There's not a piece of fan mail that I have not answered unless it got lost or mutilated in some way. My autograph is worth nothing, not even a penny. Minus zero.

**IS THE MAJORITY OF MAIL ABOUT STAR WARS, OR MAYBE THE LION KING?**

A lot of Darth Vader pictures—and the ones that I cherish most are the ones that also have David Prowse's signature on them. They sent it to England and got his, then now they're sending it to me. That means they're really serious about it.

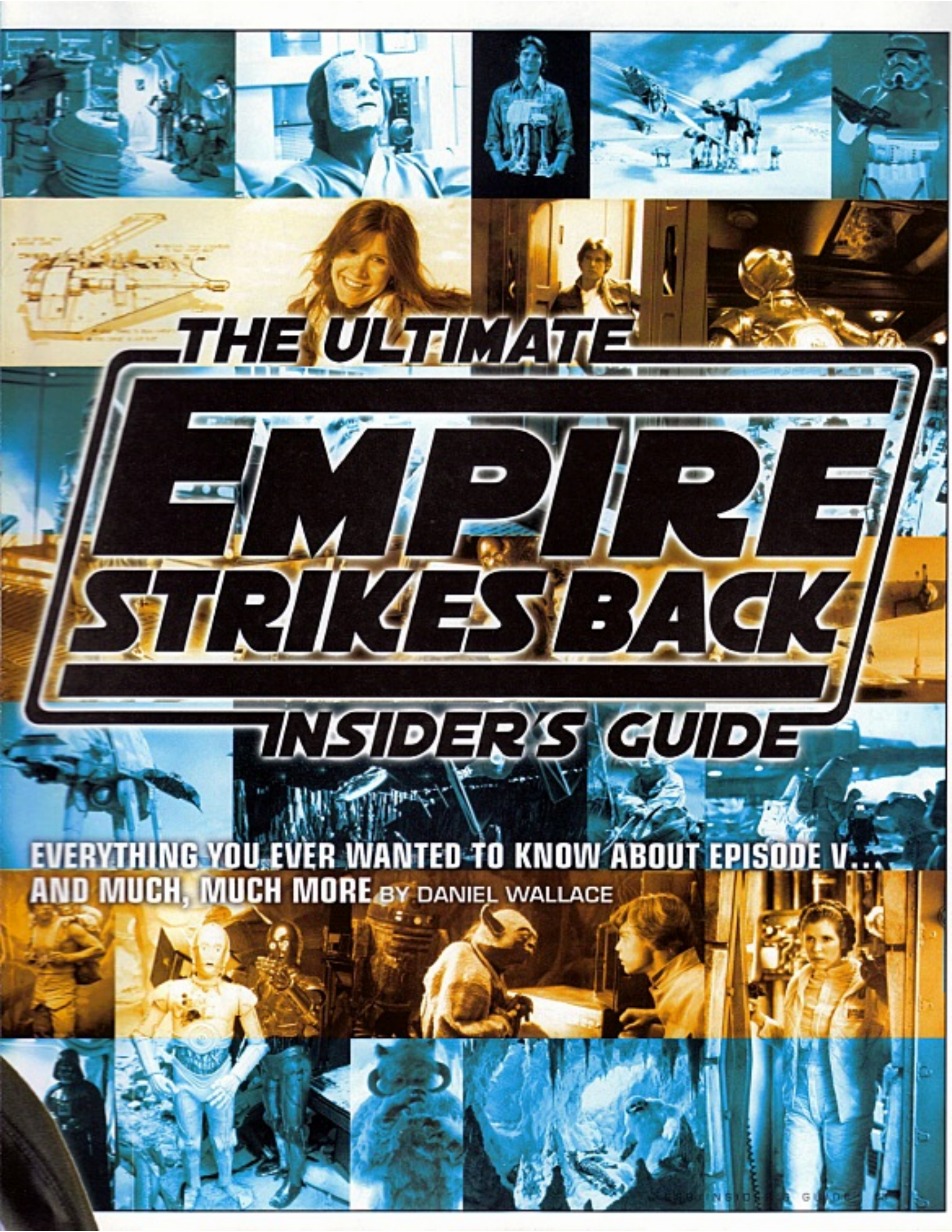
**WHY DO YOU THINK WE'RE STILL TALKING ABOUT STAR WARS AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?**

It belongs in the realm of icon. It becomes a part of the mythology of society. It's mythic, and I think all those things endure. ☐










**THE ULTIMATE**

# **EMPIRE STRIKES BACK**

**INSIDER'S GUIDE**

**EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT EPISODE V...  
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE BY DANIEL WALLACE**





## the lost scenes



THE CUT SCENES FROM THE CLASSIC STAR WARS TRILOGY have become legend. Each episode has its own unseen "Holy Grail"—one major sequence that was filmed but ultimately deleted for the final theatrical release. In fan shorthand, these elusive scenes have simple two-word names: the "Biggs scene," the "sandstorm scene." Luke's omitted visit with his friend Biggs Darklighter from *Star Wars: A New Hope* was recently included on the *Behind the Magic* CD-ROM from LucasArts and explored in detail in *Insider* #35, along with *Return of the Jedi*'s missing sandstorm sequence.

*The Empire Strikes Back*, of course, has its own Holy Grail: the infamous "wampa scene." For this special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, the *Insider* was able to obtain rare images of this and several other excised *Empire* sequences from Skywalker Ranch's archives.

**wampa attack:** Originally Hoth's wampa ice creatures were to have played a larger role in the film by breaking into Echo Base and

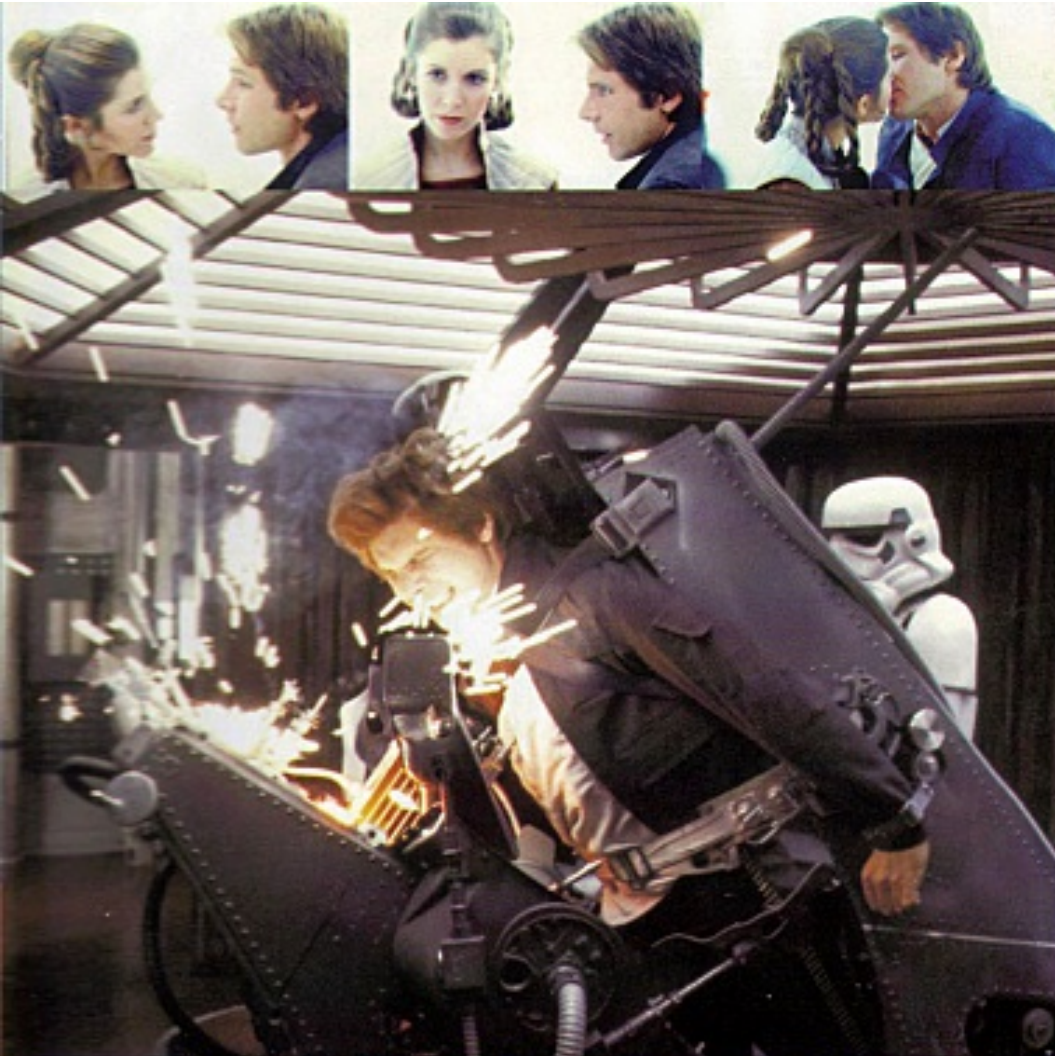
wreaking havoc. The surprised Rebels were to eventually prevail and lock up several of the wampas in a supply closet. This concept was later simplified to just one rampant wampa. The wampa attack was shot at Elstree Studios, but the crew encountered difficulties with the on-set effects and the wampa costume.

The missing "sticker scene" was a post-script to the wampa attack. As Imperial snowtroopers chased our heroes through Echo

Base, See-Threepio was to stop and remove the warning sticker from the aforementioned supply closet, causing the oblivious troopers to enter the room and become wampa chow. In *Insider* #29, Anthony Daniels recalled the difficulty of performing this simple task on set, bemoaning, "Have you any idea how inflexible Threepio's hands are?" Despite the fact that this scene was cut from the film, a one-second snippet of Threepio ripping off the warning sticker made its way into one of *Empire*'s theatrical trailers.

**RESCUED FROM THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR:**  
[ABOVE] Imperial snowtroopers storm a wampa-laden supply closet on Echo Base; [RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM] Han and Leia's lost kiss; Solo's extended torture sequence; in the aftermath of the battle between Rebels and wampas, one wampa is left dead while 2-1B operates on a slain tauntaun.





**AS THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** evolved from rough concept to final form, ideas were generated and discarded, while other concepts were plucked from early drafts of *Star Wars: A New Hope* and used anew.

**vader's hide-out:** In one concept for *Empire*, Darth Vader would appear at his private retreat, described as "a grim castle of black iron" amid a sea of lava. During this sequence Vader would be shown feeding gargoyles from a golden bowl.

**clone wars:** The first draft contained ties to the Clone Wars mentioned in *A New Hope*. Lando was "a clone of the Ashandi family," hiding out because of the war that practically wiped out his species. Later in the saga, it was suggested that Lando might run into a clan of clones who looked exactly like him.

**early cloud city:** In George Lucas' early *Star Wars* scripts, the rescue of the Princess took place in a floating prison city instead of aboard the Death Star. Ralph McQuarrie's conceptual painting of this floating prison was used as the basis for Cloud City, with remarkably little change in design. Joe Johnston was responsible for adding Cloud City's art deco architectural details.



**ice fish:** The wampa was originally conceived as a fishlike monster that could "swim" through the snow.

**gas planet:** In one early *Empire* story concept, Han, Leia, Chewie, and Threepio visited Kettlebrae, the Gas Planet, where they were attacked by fog-dwelling aliens called Whatnots.




**novel ideas:** The scene where Artoo mistakenly plugs into a power socket in Cloud City was originally conceived for *A New Hope* and appeared in that film's novelization. In the novel, Artoo plugs into an electrical outlet aboard the Death Star and Threepio responds with, "You could have fried your insides. That's a power outlet, stupid, not an information terminal."

**thank the maker:** In early story sessions for *Empire* it was suggested that Vader could pluck Threepio's "heart" from the droid's dismembered parts on Bespin and crush it in his fist. Imagine the prequel implications had this scene survived. ☛





## the lost scenes



While it was never intended for use in the wampa attack scene, the special wampa suit built for location shooting in Finse, Norway, deserves an honorable mention here. Director Irvin Kershner wanted a long shot of the wampa dragging Luke to its ice lair, and a colossal wampa suit with built-in stilts—designed by Joe Johnston and operated by Des Webb—was employed, with disappointing results. Webb could barely see in the suit, and in the soft snow it was impossible for him to keep his balance.

None of the footage was used, and instead ILM's Phil Tippett built a small hand-

held wampa puppet. The puppet wampa, lunging at the camera, is visible on screen for only a fraction of a second, just prior to the shot of Luke getting knocked from his tauntaun (which was filmed on location in Finse and involved a giant wampa arm on a stick).

Even though the wampa attack ended up on the cutting room floor, echoes of it still remain in the completed film. Sharp-eyed viewers will notice medical droid Too-Onebee examining a dead tauntaun slaughtered by wampas in the background of Echo Base, and Leia tellingly mentions "those creatures" while

discussing the Imperial probe droid.

**luke's bacta mask:** After Luke was decanted from his bacta container, a scene was filmed with Luke in his hospital bed wearing a *Phantom of the Opera*-style half-mask, presumably to facilitate the healing of his wampa-inflicted facial scars. Medical droid Too-Onebee was to remove the bacta mask just before the arrival of well-wishers See-Threepio and Artoo-Detoo.

**cloud city romance:** Photos from the Lucasfilm archives hint at a deeper exploration of Han and Leia's romance after their arrival at Cloud City, including an additional kiss (or a near-kiss). These scenes most likely took place in Leia's Cloud City suite before Chewbacca



**The Most Ominous Promotion Ever**  
"You are in command now, Admiral Piett!"





brought in the box containing Threepio's parts.

**the torture of han solo:** As director Irvin Kershner explained in *Star Wars: The Annotated Screenplays*: "I originally filmed more shots of Solo as he is being tortured. There were flashes of electricity everywhere. But it was cut out because we were afraid it might be too intense for children."

**luke and lando atop the falcon:** In the final version of *Empire*, Luke falls from the Cloud City weather vane and we hear an off-camera thump. The next shot features Lando pulling the exhausted Jedi down the Falcon's access tunnel, and we naturally assume the rescue occurred with a minimum of fuss.

But originally, Luke was to have landed on the Falcon's top half some distance from the open hatch, requiring Lando to climb precariously out on the surface of the ship to bring Luke inside. This missing sequence explains why Lando hooks himself to the Falcon's bulkhead with a cable just before popping the top hatch. While filming this scene, Mark Hamill sprained his thumb during one of the falls and filming was suspended for several days. ❄️

**MORE FROM THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR:** [OPPOSITE PAGE] Lando saves Luke as the Falcon hovers beneath Cloud City—which would have been added in place of the blue screen had the sequence been completed; [ABOVE, TOP TO BOTTOM] 2-1B removes Luke's bacta mask; C-3PO tears off the wampa warning sticker, leading the snowtroopers to their doom.

**wampa:** With his bloody claws and jagged fangs, this Hoth snowman is downright abominable. We have no idea how the wampa manages to freeze its meals in ice and hang them from the ceiling of his lair, but we're not about to go and ask.



**trandoshan:** The TV commercial that introduced Kenner's Bossk action figure described it as "Bossk, alien bounty hunter." Back then that was enough, but these days *Star Wars* fans want details. Now we know that Bossk is a Trandoshan, a species of bloodthirsty reptilian mercenaries who are enthusiastic Wookiee skinnners.



**gand:** Zuckuss the bounty hunter is a Gand, an ammonia-breathing alien inhabiting a planet swirling in opaque mists. But in a mix-up Kenner gave its Zuckuss action figure the name of the droid 4-LOM, and some early comics confused Zuckuss with fellow bounty hunter Dengar. With so much confusion over his name, it's little wonder Zuckuss' species received little attention until recently.



**ugnaughts:** Swinish aliens who operate Cloud City's carbon freezers, Ugnaughts are fond of practicing their passing skills with the heads of dismembered protocol droids. The late Jack Purvis, who played the Chief Ugnaught in *Empire*, also played the Chief Jawa in *Star Wars: A New Hope* and Teebo the Ewok in *Return of the Jedi*.

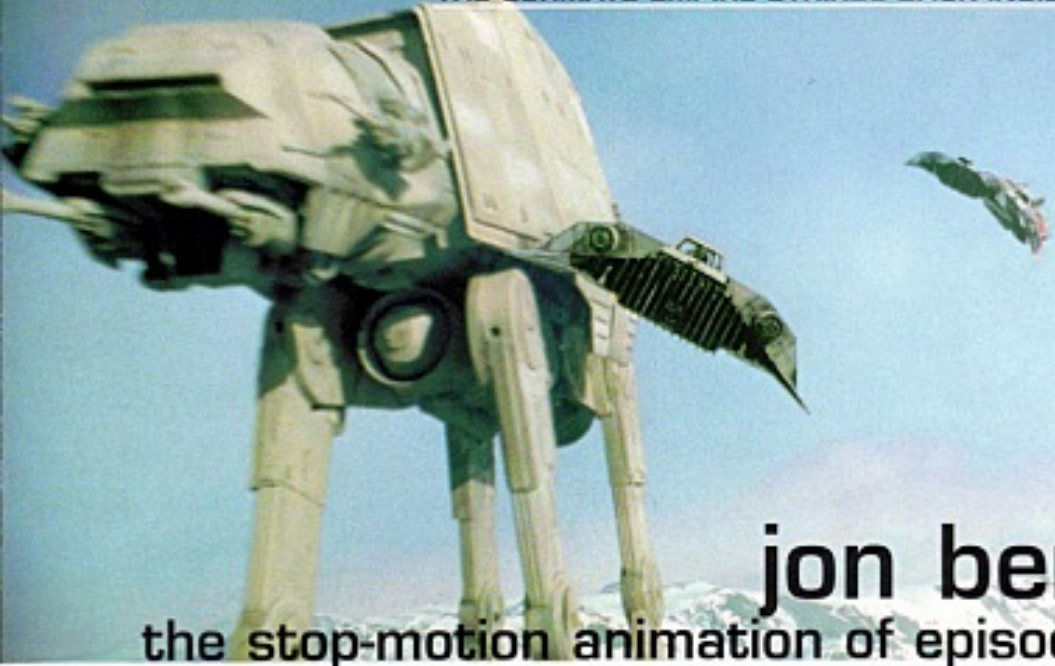


**space slug:** What do Punch & Judy, Lamb Chop, Kermit, and *Empire's* space slug have in common? They're all hand puppets. One of the oldest and simplest visual tricks, hand puppetry in *Empire* is combined with expert compositing and visual effects to create the illusion of a 900 meter monster worm. 🐛



## alien line-up





## jon berg the stop-motion animation of episode v

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK IS ONE OF CINEMA'S MOST IMPRESSIVE SHOWCASES of the art of stop-motion animation. The process involves shooting models one frame at a time, moving them slightly between each snap of the shutter, so that when the film is replayed at normal speed, the subject appears to move under its own power. This classic special effects technique was pioneered by Willis O'Brien (*King Kong*) and Ray Harryhausen (*The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*). Over the last decade, the use of stop motion in movies has gradually declined in favor of computer animation, but adherents of stop motion say it still has a singular charm that can't be replicated.

In *Empire*, much of the action on Hoth was accomplished with stop-motion, including the tauntauns (animated by Phil Tippett) and the Imperial AT-AT walkers as they overrun Rebel trenches and swat passing snowspeeders. The Battle of Hoth owes much of its visual power to Jon Berg, a gifted animator, modelmaker, and visual effects artist who worked on all three classic *Star Wars* films, as well as *Gremlins*, *Dragonslayer*, *The Fly*, *Naked Lunch*, and *2010*. The *Insider* caught up with Jon Berg to ask him about the movie he recalls as "a unique and wonderful thing to be part of."

### WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING YOU WORKED ON FOR EMPIRE?

I remember going into Gary Kurtz's office and he had some of the wonderful full-color illustrations by Ralph McQuarrie, a superb artist—that's kind of obvious, isn't it? He showed me some artwork for the walker sequence and the tauntauns, and then he showed me some of Joe Johnston's artwork, and I thought, "Boy, this is going to be a knockout. This is going to be the kind of thing I would have loved to have seen as a kid."

My job was to figure out how we were going to do all this stuff. I remember somebody had done a sketch on possibly doing the walkers through some sort of a marionette system. We had to figure out, first, how are we going to

make these big machines—just make them—and then how are we going to make them move? It was a close collaboration between Phil, Joe Johnston, Dennis Muren, and myself, and then we brought in Tom St. Amand to help build all the parts after I figured out what parts we needed to build.

I had a little shop down in Los Angeles and started to work up some prototypes, just figuring out how the heck we were going to do this. The scale of the project was enormous. I started making prototype parts in my machine shop and I'd go up to the Bay Area to give the others a progress report until I eventually moved up there—ILM wasn't even set up at that time. After I figured out the mechanics of the whole thing, we brought Tom St. Amand up to work from my prototypes and build the finished parts.

We were going to shoot it blue-screen, and as we saw the more effective table-top work where you don't have to worry about matte lines or anything, we decided to go with stop-motion. At that time Richard Edlund was also developing a lot of motion control applications for stop motion. We did a dolly shot on a prototype model, just pushing this thing along, not even animating it, just to see how motion control could add a blur to a linear move. It kind of takes the "curves" off regular stop motion, which was very encouraging.

### HOW LARGE WERE THE MODEL WALKERS?

About 19 inches tall by 19 inches long. They were a fairly good-sized puppet. We also had a four-foot walker that wasn't animated, just shot at high speed for the shots where walkers needed to fall over.

### I READ THE "SNOW" WAS ACTUALLY COMPOSED OF MICROSCOPIC BITS OF GLASS.

The substance we used for the walker sequence was baking soda. We did that so you could see the foot dragging through the snow. Since these are really big, heavy things, their feet would dig into the snow.

The substance you're thinking of was a terrific material called micro-balloons, which are almost microscopically sized little spheres of glass. The guys in the model shop, Lorne Peterson and Steve Gawley, had worked on *Battlestar Galactica* and there was an ice planet on there. They did a lot of research that was helpful for us later. The micro-balloons were great, but you'd just blow on them and they'd fly away, almost like dandelion fluff. So we only used them with the four-foot walker, since you'd get a nice spray from the micro-balloons as the walker crashed into the snow.

### WERE THE MODELS MOTORIZED IN ANY WAY?

What you see is all by hand. It's all a stop-motion artifact. One thing I did when I was designing the walker was to create little squared-off pistons in the upper legs and little doohickeys on the inside. So when you did the leg animation these little mechanisms would actually move along with it, and you'd get secondary animation that you wouldn't have to worry about doing yourself. I thought those lit-



**"I remember saying, 'This thing looks so much like an elephant, why don't we just go out and shoot some film?'"**

tie fun, things going on with the walker's movement would make it look like something was actually happening mechanically there.

**IS IT TRUE THAT THE ANIMATORS STUDIED ELEPHANTS TO GET IDEAS ON HOW THE WALKERS WOULD MOVE?**

Actually that was my idea. I remember saying, "This thing looks so much like an elephant, why don't we just go out and shoot some film?" It wound up being this whole expedition that went out—Dennis Muren, Phil Tippett and I, and a whole camera crew. There was a wonderful place called Marine World Africa USA. The elephant we used was a really sweet Indian elephant named Mardji [who had already played a bantha in *A New Hope*], and she had a trainer. We shot quite a bit of footage of her walking back and forth, so we could get an idea of the motions an animal that size and configuration goes through in just walking.

**IT REALLY WORKED—IT LOOKS SO ANIMALISTIC, AND THERE'S SOMETHING VERY UNSETTLING AND MENACING ABOUT THAT.**

Well, they gave us an enormous amount of freedom. Nobody ever came to me and said, "We want it to move like this." After I had started this heavy, relentless, earth-pounding concept, [producer] Gary Kurtz said, "It's different than I thought. It works, but I'd always thought of these things as big dogs, just trotting along." That image never entered my mind, because I think of something so big and heavy, and of the limited technology involved in being able to lift those big feet. At the same time there's a sense of relentlessness.

**GOING BACK A LITTLE, WHAT WORK DID YOU DO ON THE FIRST STAR WARS FILM?**

The chess game. Phil Tippett and I designed those little characters, and we also

did some of the characters for the cantina sequence. George wanted additional pickup shots for the cantina, and a bunch of us ended up wearing the costumes. I played one of the cantina band members—I'm up there carrying this big tuba thing. In another shot there are two bald-headed aliens with greenish skin and red eyes arguing with each other—that's me and Phil, and I'm the one wearing the space suit with the "it's not my fault" gesture. And for the hammerhead alien, in that shot I'm actually crouched down behind the table operating that thing.

**WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH STOP-MOTION BEFORE STAR WARS?**

Well, for a few years I just tinkered around like so many of the guys in my generation, in my folks' garage. I was captivated by the idea that you could make a sculpture and create the illusion that it was moving around by itself. Then I got a job at a studio called Cascade Pictures in California that produced a lot of television commercials, including the Pillsbury Doughboy. It was probably the only place at that time producing regular stop-motion commercials. That's where I met [Empire effects artist] Doug Beswick, Dennis Muren, and Phil Tippett—it was a hub for all these folks who were interested in that particular technique.

**WERE YOU A FAN OF WILLIS O'BRIEN AND RAY HARRYHAUSEN?**

Oh absolutely. When I was a kid, my older sister took me to a movie she thought would be like a Lassie picture. I asked her about it years later and she said, "All I remember is I looked over and you were looking at the picture through your hands over your eyes." It was *Mighty Joe Young* [the 1949 original which featured the work of both O'Brien and

Harryhausen]. It zonked me, and it still does. When I found out that Joe Young had been done with dimensional sculptures and animated one frame at a time, I thought, "Boy, that's really magical." After seeing *King Kong*, which is a technical tour-de-force, I was really set.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT COMPUTER ANIMATION?**

It's a jaw-dropping tool. It seems like it can do just about anything. But having said that, it's like any tool, like a pencil or an artist's paintbrush and palette box—you still need the eye of an artist and a storyteller to pay off the tool's potential. When *Star Wars* came out, everyone said, "My, what an amazing tool motion control is," and it is. But it's only as good as the person using it.

**YOU DEFINITELY USED IT WELL ON EMPIRE. WHAT KIND OF FEEDBACK DID YOU GET ON THE FINAL FOOTAGE FROM GEORGE?**

There's one thing I remember, and unfortunately I was not in dailies when this happened. I had spent two days on this shot—which wound up getting cut into two pieces—where a walker starts to turn as it's shooting one of the speeders. It starts to swing around to camera right. It's one of the few shots in the movie where you see a walker turn, since most of the shots are just them marching forward. I spent days getting that, because it was a very hard thing to engineer and figure out animation-wise.

Dennis Muren came up to me and said, "You know that shot you've been working on? George looked at it the other day." George is extremely low key, but also very sincere. So I said, "Yeah, was it OK?" Dennis said, "Well George was just sitting there, and when it came up on screen he went, 'Wow.'" And I didn't think I could do any better than that. ☼

## 7 most unforgettable lines



"Why, you stuck up, half-witted, scruffy-looking nerf-herder!"



"I thought they smelled bad on the outside!"



"Artoo-Detoo, you know better than to trust a strange computer."



"Apology accepted, Captain Needs."



"Never tell me the odds!"



"No! Try not. Do. Or do not. There is no try."



"I am altering the deal. Pray I don't alter it any further."



# special edition changes: an empire restored

**IN 1997, *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* underwent a major evolution. In addition to minor freshening, such as cleaning the picture and editing out matte lines, many major sequences were altered forever.**

**lair of the wampa:** Considering all the troubles the original cast and crew had with the wampa suits, it's understandable that George Lucas would want to try one more time

having their arms sliced off by rookie Jedi Knights (not well).

**boba fett's slave I:** Fan favorite Fett has a little more room to stretch his jets in *Empire*. After the *Millennium Falcon* exits the garbage stream left by a departing Star Destroyer, a new effects shot follows Slave I as it stealthily pursues its quarry.

**cloud city expansion:** Many elements were added to make the utopic Cloud City even more spectacular than it was in the original. George Lucas once called the original indoor set "very claustrophobic ... and that always bothered me." In response, Cloud City was "opened up" with windows and balconies looking out over spectacular sunset views. A new shot shows hundreds of Cloud City citizens massed together on a crowded avenue as Lando warns his people to evacuate. The most impressive addition is a dizzying pursuer's-eye-view as we chase a cloud car around the verandas and over the rooftops of the floating mining metropolis.

**luke's scream:** In the original version of *Empire*, Luke meditatively chooses to let himself fall silently to an unknown fate rather than side with Vader on Bespin. In the *Special Edition*, we now hear Luke scream loudly on his way down the reactor shaft, reflecting his fear and anguish over his father's revelation.

**darth vader's trip to his star destroyer:** Where once Vader simply growled, "Bring my shuttle," we now see the entire sequence of events as the Dark Lord makes haste from Bespin to his waiting *Executor*. Vader's line was replaced with, "Alert my Star Destroyer to prepare for my arrival," and new shots of an Imperial shuttle breaking Bespin's orbit and Vader disembarking in the *Executor's* main hangar are sprinkled into the original footage of Luke's rescue.

In one new shot, Vader marches across a Cloud City landing pad to reach the parked shuttle. This shot features former LucasArts special effects animator C. Andrew Nelson in the Vader suit. Nelson is thus the sixth person to date to play Anakin Skywalker on film, along with Jake Lloyd, Sebastian Shaw, David Prowse, voice actor James Earl Jones, and stuntman Bob Anderson. ☉



for the *Special Edition* release of *Empire*. A brand new wampa costume was constructed and worn by ILM effects artist Howie Weed, and new shots were filmed inside a scaled-down ice cave set. Although no attempt was made to restore the Echo Base "wampa attack" scene, the *Special Edition* showed us the wampa's eating habits (messy) and how wampas react to

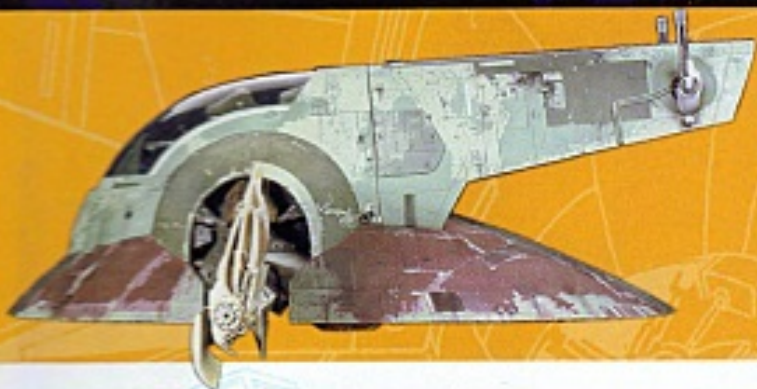
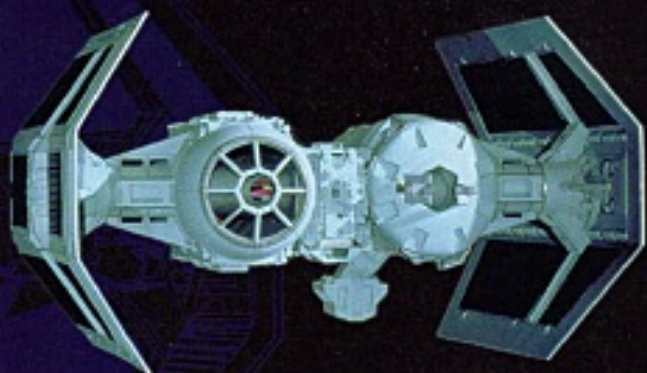
**"I Have a Bad Feeling About This"**  
A *Star Wars* tradition, in *The Empire Strikes Back* this line is spoken by Leia when the asteroid cave she's standing in begins to look more and more like a digestive tract.





# starship lot

**TIE bomber:** ILM nicknamed the TIE bomber the "Double Chili Dog," and indeed, one of its concussion missiles could easily have given the space slug a bad case of indigestion. The TIE bomber combines the bent wings of Vader's TIE Interceptor with a unique double-cockpit configuration—one chili dog for the pilot, the other chili dog for the bombs.



**slave I:** According to legend, Boba Fett's *Slave I* was inspired by the street lamps near ILM, but in *Star Wars: The Annotated Screenplays*, assistant art director Nilo Rodis-Jamero puts this rumor to rest. "I remember seeing a radar dish and stopping to sketch it very quickly to see if I could get something out of it," he explains. "When we were building the ships at ILM, somebody looked at street lamps and pointed out that they looked like Boba's ship. So everyone began to think that was where I got the idea for the design."



**twin-pod cloud car:** Up to this point in the *Star Wars* movies, ships came in severe shades of gray, so to suddenly see one that was unashamedly orange was remarkably refreshing. The cloud car is used to patrol the airspace around Bespin, and its two passengers ride in separate, self-contained compartments. The strategic reasons for this are unclear, but think how useful it would be for isolating that annoying carpool partner.



**rebel frigate:** Resembling an outboard motor turned on its side, the Rebel frigate is the location of Luke's cyborg surgery at the end of *Empire*. The ship's delicate central stem makes you think you could crack one like a pencil, but in *Return of the Jedi* Rebel frigates reappear as tough warships during the Battle of Endor.



**executor:** The reveal is brilliant. As a group of Star Destroyers (one of which, in *A New Hope*, seemed to stretch on forever) gathers together in space, a baleful shadow is cast over their formation. The mighty *Executor* has arrived. This Super Star Destroyer has been variously pegged as 8000 and 12,800 meters in length, but either way it's plenty big enough to spoil your picnic.





**hoth:** Han Solo said "there isn't enough life on this ice cube to fill a space cruiser," and at the time he didn't even know about the man-eating wampas. A remote, forbidding, and thoroughly miserable planet, the frozen world of Hoth provides foolish settlers with a thousand and one ways to die. In terms of sheer inhospitality, Hoth is much like Tatooine, only at the opposite end of the centigrade scale.



**dagobah:** While warmer than Hoth, Dagobah isn't much cheerier. The swamp planet is bursting with life, but unfortunately most of it wants to eat you. Dagobah's ecosystem is bizarre and rather creepy. Ralph McQuarrie set the tone for Dagobah in his concept paintings. "I imagined that everything on the planet was petrified," he once said, "except for fungus-like things that grew on the floor, food basically for the creatures that lived there."



**bespin:** A gas giant, Bespin lacks any kind of surface — if you fall, you'll keep falling until the pressures near the core squash you like a grape. Residents of Bespin live in floating communities such as Cloud City, which is both a Tibanna gas mine and a pleasurable vacation resort. Bespin's name came from "Besspin-Kaaleita," originally a fairy-tale like garden planet mentioned as a possible setting during early story conferences for *Empire*. ☉

# 5 reasons empire is a fan favorite

SURE, THE MOVIE WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED for the introduction of Yoda, the gutsy decision to put the big special-effects battle at the beginning of the film, and the shocking revelation about Luke's parentage. But the following list is why *The Empire Strikes Back* is really considered a classic:

**wedge antilles:** Yeah, yeah, Wedge appeared in *Star Wars: A New Hope* first. But it's his reappearance in this film that is one of the trilogy's coolest moments. When Luke says "Wedge, I've lost my gunner. You'll have to make this shot," we see that even the background characters are in this fight for the long haul.



**vader's bald head:** A puckered scar, a cap of pale flesh, and Admiral Piett's horror-struck expression as he stifles a nervous gulp. If you thought Vader's mask was intimidating, these five seconds of film time darkly hint that the Sith Lord's true countenance is unspeakably terrifying. To look upon it is to go mad—no offense to the late Sebastian Shaw.

**the raging wookiee:** Check it out—Chewbacca never fires his bowcaster throughout all of *Star Wars: A New Hope*. And in *Return of the Jedi* he teams up with the Ewoks for his best fight scenes. But *Empire* shows us that hell hath no fury like an angry Wookiee—just ask one the stormtroopers who get thrown off the carbon-freezing platform. Watch that first step, boys.

**breaking the fourth wall:** When the door shuts in his face during the escape from Echo Base, See-Threepio turns to the camera and grumbles, "How typical." Who is he talking to? He's addressing us, the audience. Unless you count Boba Fett's glare into the camera in *Star Wars: The Special Edition*, this is the only example of the technique known as "breaking the fourth wall" to be found in a *Star Wars* film.

**boba fett's jangling spurs:** The *Star Wars* saga incorporates many elements of the classic Western. As Boba Fett joins Darth Vader in Cloud City's dining room, an obvious aural cue is the distinctive ching-ching-ching of boot spurs, reminiscent of Clint Eastwood's "Man With No Name" and other Western archetypes. And Boba Fett doesn't even wear spurs! Eastwood's Man With No Name character is appropriate in more ways than one—save for the credits, Boba Fett's name isn't mentioned once in the film.

## and don't forget these 4 runners-up:

**the imperial march:** Hands down, the most intimidating piece of movie music ever written. The owners of baseball stadiums are eternally grateful to John Williams, since now they always have something to play as the manager heads out to the mound to yank a struggling pitcher.



**lobot looks at lando:** The sideways glance Lobot gives Lando at the conclusion of the carbon-freezing scene is subtle, but that tiny movement of the eyes is laconic Lobot's way of saying, "We're not going to take this any more, are we?"

**"two fighters against a star destroyer?":** This line is spoken by snowspeeder pilot Hobbie just before the Battle of Hoth, a bloodbath in which hundreds of Rebels will lose their lives. But Hobbie delivers this line as if he were heading down to pick up his shirts from the dry cleaners. Must be that Rogue Squadron cool.

**the number you dialed has been disconnected:** An asteroid crashes into the bridge of a Star Destroyer. The camera immediately cuts to the inside of Vader's *Executor*, where the Dark Lord is addressing a holographic lineup of Star Destroyer commanders. The unlucky commander throws up his arms in terror as his image flickers out of existence. Vader doesn't even flinch. ☉



# freeze-frame classics



EVEN IF YOU'VE SEEN *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* dozens of times (and who hasn't?), there are always subtle details to spot. Here are five things to look for during your next viewing—but be sure to keep one thumb on the VCR's pause button.

**Ouch!** As the first pursuing TIE fighter gets pasted by an asteroid, careful frame-by-frame examination will reveal a doomed TIE pilot spinning away from the wreckage, crushed, exposed to vacuum, and—to add insult to injury—on fire. And you thought you were having a bad day. (You'll only see this one if you have one of the widescreen editions.)

**Oops!** Two stormtroopers roughly drag Han Solo into the Cloud City holding cell. As they dump him, one trooper nearly has his helmet pulled clean off by Han's dragging left arm. Playing it cool as Imperials always do, the stormtrooper walks out the door as if nothing happened, his helmet hopelessly askew.

**Look Sir!** When C-3PO's head rolls down the conveyor belt in Cloud City, the camera crew is briefly visible in the reflection of his golden dome.

**Run!** Ah, the infamous Ice Cream Guy. After Lando warns the citizens of Cloud City to leave before more Imperial troops arrive, a crowd of panicked evacuees runs past the camera. The last straggler in the group is lugging a piece of machinery that appears to be an ice cream maker. Farewell, Ice Cream Guy, and good luck selling your ice cream on some other, more appreciative planet.

**Mashed!** In the asteroid chase scene, one of the special-effects artists inserted a potato amid the spinning rocks. No, we've never been able to find it either. ☹



**The Most Tempting Job Offer in History**  
"Join me and together we can rule the galaxy as father and son."

things you probably didn't know about *the empire strikes back*.

**jeremy bulloch**, who played Boba Fett, can also be seen as the Imperial officer who pulls Princess Leia down a corridor. "Luke! It's a trap!"



**the first draft** of *The Empire Strikes Back*, dated February 1978 by Leigh Brackett, was known only as *Star Wars Sequel*.

**the climax** of Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* takes place outside of a snowy mountain lodge, and while the scene doesn't look familiar (snow is snow, after all) what you're actually seeing is a little piece of Echo Base. *Empire* and *The Shining* used most of the same "snow"—actually dendritic salt—since the two productions filmed on adjacent stages at Elstree Studios.

**on hoth**, General Rieekan says "Send Rogues 10 and 11 to sector 3-8," an in-joke reference to Lucas' first feature film *THX 1138*.

**mark hamill** had to repeat the shot of Luke hitting his head on the ceiling of Yoda's hut 14 times.

**the last shot** of principal photography, completed on September 24, 1979, was the close-up view of the tauntaun's belly being sliced open. Harrison Ford was unavailable on that day, so a crew member was enlisted to wear the gloves and hold the lightsaber prop. ☹



# EPISODE V DEPICTED IN COMICS: THE SHADOWY EDGE OF EMPIRE

BY THEIR NATURE, comics, like books, have the luxury to go deeper than your average film. But *The Empire Strikes Back* is no average film—among many *Star Wars* fans, Episode V is arguably the best of the original trilogy, emulating the greatest elements of the classic movie serials at the same time that it took tremendous risks with the runaway popularity of *Star Wars*' main characters. It was one of the most anticipated films of all time, and among anticipated films, it delivered like none other. All of which made it even harder for the comics artists charged with expanding on this already expansive vision. Indeed, *The Empire Strikes Back* was so well crafted that it's difficult to add anything to the story. Still, comics fans crave more, and for the last 20 years, both Dark Horse and Marvel have devoted their best efforts to adaptations and corollary series based on the film.

## EMPIRE ADAPTATION: WHEN WAMPAS ATTACK

In 1980, Marvel Comics contacted Al Williamson and asked him to illustrate the comics adaptation of *The Empire Strikes Back*. Al's relationship to *Star Wars* had begun years before, when comics store owner Ed Summer got in touch with the artist. Ed's friend, the director of *American Graffiti*, was creating a new space fantasy film, and specifically asked for Al Williamson to draw the comics adapta-

tion. The director was George Lucas, and he fondly remembered Al's work on *Flash Gordon* comic strips from the 1960s.

Al was very busy at the time and did not accept the offer, but he remembers going to see *Star Wars* in 1977. "I was spellbound by the beauty of the thing," he recalls now. "It was nice to see something done with heroes who were noble and inspiring, instead of with the dark-centered characters and so-called heroes we are so flooded with today." Three years later, Al and the late writer Archie Goodwin made sure they were available for the Marvel comics adaptation of *The Empire Strikes Back*. "Archie wrote true to *Star Wars*," Al says, "and in my opinion, he has yet to be surpassed."

The adaptation, repackaged by Dark Horse in August 1994, stands as a near perfect model for future adaptations. Sharp fans have also noticed that there are some additional story elements in the comics, such as a wampa attack on the Rebel Base. These were based on Al and Archie's interpretations of scripts from well before the film's final edit, providing an interesting glimpse into the story George Lucas originally had in mind.

## FROZEN WORLD OF OTA: FIRST FETT

The earliest comic projects on behalf of *TESB* actually began before the film was released: Boba Fett's enigmatic first appearance on screen, standing in the lineup with other,



Boba Fett went on the attack in "The Frozen World of Ota," a story arc begun by Russ Manning in the daily *Star Wars* comic strip.

obviously lesser bounty hunters, had been preceded by a surprise appearance in the *Star Wars* newspaper strips created by Russ Manning.

During the "Frozen World of Ota" story arc, Luke Skywalker encounters Boba Fett while on patrol, but the pair are captured by Ota's indigenous Snogars. Though they free themselves, Han Solo still comes to Luke's rescue. But the Rebel heroes discover that it isn't Han Solo who Boba Fett is after—at least not on this trip. Nevertheless, the fact that Fett and Solo had some history was made very apparent.

"Frozen World of Ota" was Russ Manning's final *Star Wars* comic strip. When poor health forced Manning to abandon the strip, his assistant Rick Hoberg and inker Alfredo Alcala took over, completing "Ota." Though Fett was a bit out of character in the story, his appearance here, along with his cartoon appearance in the 1978 "Star Wars Holiday Special," did much to increase fan interest during the period between the first and second films, and by the time Fett finally appeared on the bridge of Darth Vader's Super Star Destroyer, many fans were known to shout out "Boba Fett!" during the earliest screenings.



Art by Al Williamson for Marvel's *Empire* comic book.





## SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE: FILLING IN THE BLANKS

It is telling that another major story from the *Empire* period did not appear for 15 years. During that time, the *Star Wars* universe had been extended 5,000 years into the past and 24 years beyond *A New Hope*, but the core time period occupied by *Empire* wasn't touched—and instead remained an invaluable resource, a well of ideas and concepts. Lucasfilm knew that the questions fans had about the period between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* needed answering, so in 1994, Lucasfilm called its licensees to Skywalker Ranch for a gigantic brainstorming meeting, and the *Shadows of the Empire* project was born.

*Shadows* was to take place in the space between *Empire* and *Jedi*, when much had taken place but had not been chronicled for the fans. What happened, for instance, with the search for Han Solo, carbonite-frozen and in the clutches of Boba Fett? When, exactly, did Luke Skywalker start dressing like his father? How did the Rebels' convoluted plan for rescuing Han come to be? Using the template of *Empire*, Dark Horse, Bantam, Galoob, Hasbro, Topps,



*Shadows of the Empire* (1996) explored the dark aftermath of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

LucasArts, and others were charged with creating nothing less than a sequel to *Empire* that would have everything but a movie.

The *Shadows of the Empire* comics were written by John Wagner, co-creator of 2000 A.D.'s popular *Judge Dredd*; and illustrated by Kilian Plunkett, who remains a fan favorite today. Like its name, *Shadows* was a gloomy story featuring a closer look at the seamy underbelly of the *Star Wars* universe, where criminals, thugs, and bounty hunters run free under the blind gaze of the Empire. In orchestration with other *Star Wars* events, such as video and feature re-releases, *Shadows* did much to keep the story behind *The Empire Strikes Back* in the minds of fans.

## OLD STRIPS, NEWER COMICS: PRE-EMPIRE ADVENTURES

The period immediately preceding *Empire* was also a fertile place for new *Star Wars* stories. Indeed, there were as many loose ends and questions in this time period as between *Empire* and *Jedi*. Although they did not take the newspaper comic strip job back in the 1970s, Al Williamson and Archie Goodwin did create an impressive array of stories for the strips after completing the *Empire* comic adaptation in 1980.

These were the first stories telling of Darth Vader's obsessive search for Luke Skywalker, Han Solo's run-in with bounty hunters at Ord Mantell, and setting up the Rebels for their fateful confrontation with the Empire on Hoth. Dark Horse repackaged the comic strips, reformatted for the comic-book page, in 1992. Since comic strips are significantly different from comic pages, Al Williamson revisited his own work 12 years later to embellish the pages with many new illustrations and corrections. The collected editions of these stories, published with the title *Classic Star Wars*, remain perennial sellers on Dark Horse's backlist.

More recently, *Vader's Quest* (*Insider* #42) took an even closer look at Vader's search for



TOP LEFT: A panel from the daily comic strip reprinted in *Classic Star Wars: Escape to Hoth*; ABOVE: Lando strikes an iconic pose in the original *Empire* comic book adaptation.

Luke Skywalker, and included the moment when the Dark Lord discovered Luke's identity, truly a tragic moment in the *Star Wars* saga. *Boba Fett: Enemy of the Empire* (*Insider* #42) examined the shadowy relationship between Fett and Darth Vader, and provided reason enough for Vader's admonition of Fett in *Empire*: "No disintegrations!"

With the advent and success of *Star Wars Tales* (*Insider* #48), a new venue has opened that promises to provide creators with a new place to tell the smaller stories surrounding *The Empire Strikes Back*. An upcoming issue of *Tales* features "Lady Luck," written by Rich Handley (also a contributor to the *Insider*) and Darko Macan, and illustrated by talented newcomer Chris Brunner. "Lady Luck" stars the shamefully under-used Lando Calrissian, and promises to show a considerably less well-kept Cloud City in the years before its magical appearance in *Empire*.

As more creators flock to the *Star Wars* titles to add their two cents' worth to the saga, perhaps more stories from the period of *The Empire Strikes Back* will appear in print. But they will always be merely smaller gems surrounding a much larger, high-flawless stone. ☉

PEET JANES IS THE FORMER EDITOR OF THE STAR WARS LINE OF COMICS FOR DARK HORSE COMICS. THIS IS HIS FINAL COLUMN FOR THE INSIDER, SO HE'D LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK ALL THE FANS FOR THEIR SUPPORT, AND REMIND THEM TO CONTINUE DEMANDING THE BEST.



# WHEN THE EMPIRE STRUCK BOOKS

BECAUSE IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS since the movie was released, it's easy to forget that *The Empire Strikes Back* first appeared in an era before the Internet and 24-hour news made every tidbit of movie gossip almost instantly available to fans worldwide. Back in the spring of 1980, unless you had some very well-connected friends or family members, the secrets of the new *Star Wars* movie were still just that: secrets.

## EMPIRE NOVELIZATION: SUBTLE DIFFERENCES

The first opportunity to find out what happened in the latest chapter of the *Star Wars* saga came a couple of weeks before the movie's premiere, with the release of the Del Rey novelization of *The Empire Strikes Back*, written by Donald F. Glut. The novelization didn't offer any photos, but its cover (adapted from a poster for the movie) did offer a few fascinating hints: the mysterious bounty hunter Boba Fett had a place on it, just below Han and Leia in an obviously romantic mood. And the back cover promised, among other things, "startling revelations"—a promise that all fans now know was more than fulfilled.

In Glut's hands, the story unfolded with cinematic speed—a boon for eager fans (including this author, then 11 years old) who raced through the novelization as quickly as their eyes and fingers would allow. But to coordinate a book's publication with a film's release, authors of novelizations typically must work from "shooting scripts" of movies that can change considerably before the final cut. So, as with the novelizations of the original *Star Wars* and *Return of the Jedi*, much of

Glut's dialogue is subtly different from that heard in the actual movie.

There are also scenes that were dropped or changed in rewriting or filming. For example, in the novel, See-Threepio never interrupts Han and Leia's kiss aboard the *Falcon*, Luke's training on Dagobah is presented in more detail, and the Rebel pilot Hobbie—a mainstay of Mike Stackpole's post-*Return of the Jedi* X-Wing books—dies in a kamikaze snowspeeder attack that takes out General Veers' AT-AT.

But in places, Glut is able to offer more detail than we got in the movie: we're teased with references to Gank killers and Triton moons, intrigued by the suggestion that Darth Vader may be trembling slightly as he awaits word from the Emperor, and even informed of where Luke came up with the idea of tripping up the AT-ATs. (It's a simple tactic a farm boy might use against a wild beast.)

## STORYBOOK AND COMIC PAPERBACK: LACK OF AT-AT—AND A PURPLE YODA

Fans who wanted an early peek at *The Empire Strikes Back*'s groundbreaking visuals had

a couple chances to get one. First, Random House's *The Empire Strikes Back Storybook*, as adapted by Shep Steneman, condensed the story without losing any of the excitement, and also offered a wealth of photos—though some of the story's surprises, such as what the AT-ATs looked like, had to wait for the theater. Though the book was intended for children, not a few eager adults picked it up as well.

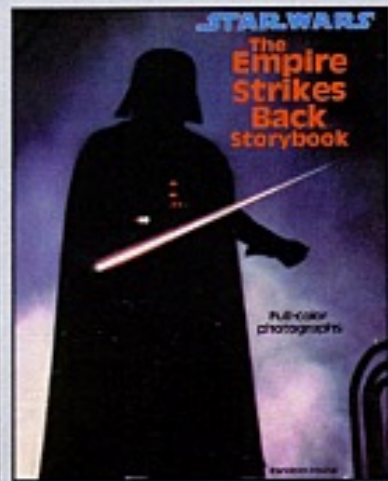
Other fans turned to Marvel Comics, which released a paperback version of its six-issue movie adaptation before the film's release. Writer Archie Goodwin and artists Al Williamson and Carlos Garzon used a summer 1979 script and hundreds of reference photos from the movie's filming to put their adaptation together.

But this time, publishing's long lead times created a curiosity. Marvel's original portrayal of Yoda was based on a Ralph McQuarrie production painting in which the Jedi Master looks like a cross between Gollum and a native shaman, with long white hair and purple skin. By the time Marvel found out that the film's Yoda would look considerably different, the paperback adaptation had already gone to press. (Marvel wasn't alone—in the novelization, Yoda's skin is blue.) His appearance was corrected in time for the individual comics issues, since reprinted by Dark Horse Comics, but fans who own the paperback adaptation still have an interesting look at what might have been.

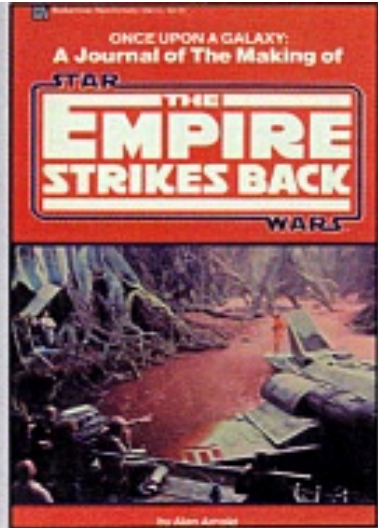
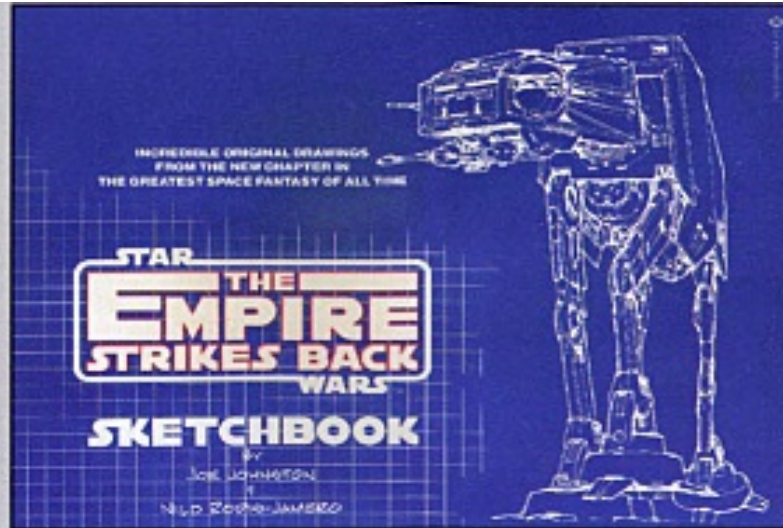
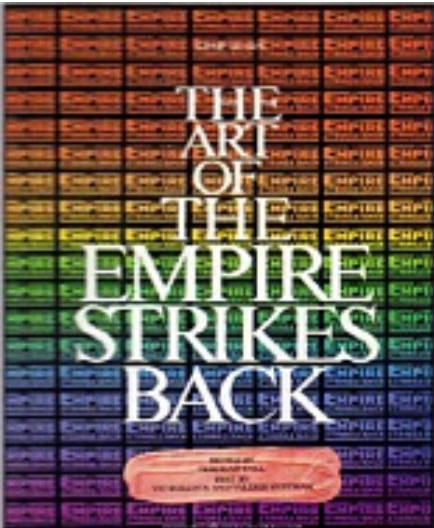
## SKETCHBOOK, ART OF: EVOLUTION OF AN EMPIRE

*The Empire Strikes Back*'s remarkable visuals also formed the heart of two Del Rey books from 1980 that were themselves sequels to earlier titles. *The Empire Strikes Back Sketchbook*, by Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis-Jamero, let fans see the development of spaceships and vehicles such as the Imperial probe droid, the AT-AT, *Slave I*, and the briefly glimpsed scout walker. (A highlight of the *Sketchbook* is an early, Samurai-inspired snowtrooper.)

*The Art of the Empire Strikes Back*, which appeared in the fall of 1980 and was reprinted in





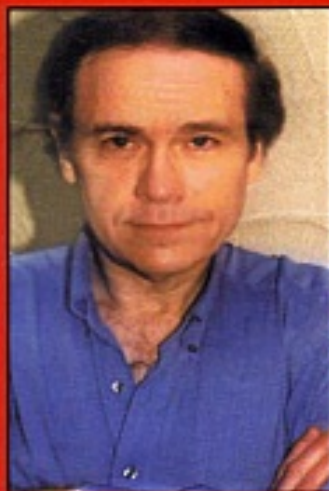


1994, provided fans with lavish McQuarrie production paintings and matte paintings used for Hoth, Bespin and Dagobah. This time around, of course, the look of the characters who had appeared in *A New Hope* were set, while the appearance of newly introduced characters such as Boba Fett and Lando Calrissian was still evolving. The effect can be startling, as in a production painting of the lunchtime confrontation between Vader and Fett and Han, Leia, Chewie, and Lando. Another not-to-be-missed offering is a wonderful McQuarrie painting of wounded Rebel soldiers huddled in their icy trench as an AT-AT pounds by—it's *Star Wars* meets *Saving Private Ryan*.

#### ONCE UPON A GALAXY: BEHIND THE SCENES AND AMONG THE CLOUDS

No look back at the crop of books that appeared in 1980 would be complete without a mention of *Once Upon a Galaxy: A Journal of the Making of The Empire Strikes Back*. Written by Alan Arnold, the film's unit publicist, *Once Upon a Galaxy* offers a diary of the movie's filming, beginning in March 1979 with Arnold's trip to Finse, Norway, alongside Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and producer Gary Kurtz, and wrapping up with a November 1979 conversation with composer John Williams. Arnold is an able guide to the film's development, sitting down with cast and crew and conducting some fascinating interviews with Lucas himself about the evolution of the saga.

There's also a hysterical blow-by-blow account of the filming of the scene in which Han Solo is put into carbon-freeze, with director Irvin Kershner bravely battling steam and lighting problems, script difficulties, and irritated actors. Unfortunately, *Once Upon a Galaxy* remains out of print, so fans who want to get their hands on a copy will have to scour used book stores, your local library, or the Internet. It's a hard book to find, but hopefully you'll be able to track it down before too many more anniversaries of *The Empire Strikes Back* pass by. ☼



#### DONALD F. GLUT: We Catch Up with the Author of *Empire's* Novelization

If you only know Donald F. Glut as the author of the *Empire Strikes Back* novelization, you're obviously no dinosaur fan.

Glut, now 56, has loved dinosaurs all his life—and he's found ways to work them into his considerable number of interests. Glut (rhymes with hoot) is a respected dinosaur scholar and the proud author of the definitive encyclopedia of the creatures. He's also an enthusiastic writer-director of low-budget movies—with a dinosaur theme, of course. He's even half of the Iridium Band, a rock 'n' roll duo whose subject is—you guessed it—dinosaurs.

Fittingly, the author came by his dinosaur obsession through a combination of childhood trips to Chicago's Field Museum and a steady diet of comic books and monster movies. But his scholarly books ultimately come from a trick played on him when he was a boy.

In the 1953 B-movie classic *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms*, Glut recalls, there's a scene in which two characters try to identify the title monster from a batch of pictures representing every known prehistoric animal. "That led to a rivalry between my friend and myself—who could get the most pictures of dinosaurs?" Later, he recalls, a friend "told me that he saw a book in the library called 'The Encyclopedia of Dinosaurs,' and it had a picture of every dinosaur ever known. I looked for that book for years until I finally found out that he was putting me on—it was a wild-goose chase and the book didn't exist."

At least not until the early 1970s, when a friend asked Glut a simple question: "Don, why don't you write it yourself?"

So Glut did. The results were 1972's *The Dinosaur Dictionary*, 1982's *New Dinosaur Dictionary*, and eventually 1997's *Dinosaurs: The Encyclopedia*, with each book described by Glut as more technical than the one before. *Dinosaurs: The Encyclopedia*, published by McFarland Books, has now been joined by the first in a series of planned supplements.

Through his own hard work, Glut has made a friend's fib into truth. "A lot of the books I wrote were based on that idea: that I wanted to read the books and nobody had written them," he says. "This was my way of reading them."

But while Glut can discuss dinosaur anatomy with the best of them, his love for the creatures' comic-book and B-movie appeal is still as fiery as that beast from 20,000 fathoms. Glut and his friend Kevin Glover are the co-founders of Frontline Entertainment ([www.frontlinefilms.com](http://www.frontlinefilms.com)), for which Glut wrote and directed 1996's *Dinosaur Valley Girls*, which somehow combines dinosaurs, a time-traveling hero, and a lost society of sexy cave women.

The low-budget movie was shot in two grueling weeks, which Glut chronicled in a 1998 book. "It was the most stressful, most strenuous two weeks I've ever endured in my life," he says. "But they were the most wonderful two weeks." —Jason Fry



# SCOUTING THE GALAXY BY STEVE SANSWEET

## THE BOUNTEROUS BOOTY OF EMPIRE

IT MAY HAVE BEEN A CLIFFHANGER, BUT IT DIDN'T LEAVE US WAITING FOR THE GOODS

**THE HISTORY OF THE STAR WARS SAGA** is bound up in waiting: waiting for news of whether more films would be made, waiting for the films themselves, and—back in 1977, at least—a very long wait for the first toys. But with *The Empire Strikes Back*, things changed, at least on the toy and goodie front.

*Star Wars* had altered not only the movie business forever, but the licensing and toy businesses too. The movie turned Kenner Products into a powerhouse and millions of kids all over the world into junior Lukes, Leias, Darths, Hans—and more than a few Chewies. But while the toy business was not initially ready for *Star Wars*, things were different by the time of *Empire's* release in 1980, and an exciting new mail-away figure was just the beginning of an *Empire* onslaught.

The new character was a bounty hunter named Boba Fett, who first appeared in an eight-minute animated segment of an otherwise fairly lame 1978, 90-

minute variety special they had the nerve to call "The Star Wars Holiday Special." With excitement building for the new film, fans were given an advance peek at this cool new character from *Empire*—and we liked what we saw. The only problem was that when we got the figure in the mail, the promised missile-firing backpack had been permanently sealed because of child-safety concerns.

But that was only a momentary disappointment. I just took a walk past a few racks of my Kenner *Empire* toys, and I got goose bumps looking over them again, remembering how cool they all are and how much attention to detail went into plastic and metal replicas of George Lucas' far-away galaxy.

What a creative outpouring! First, the vehicles: the mighty AT-AT, the super-cool Slave I, Snowspeeder, Scout Walker, Rebel Transporter, and Twin-Pod Cloud Car. Then there were the playsets: Imperial Attack, Turret and Probot,

Dagobah, Hoth Ice Planet and Rebel Command Center.

But my personal favorite, although not popular at the time, is the Micro Collection, born of an idea that eventually became today's Cinema Scene. Parents had invested too heavily in the action-figure scale, the collectors market hadn't quite developed, and, as a result, the Micro Collection didn't catch fire. But I still believe it was some of Kenner's best work at the time, and I prize my Hoth, Bespin and Death Star Worlds, along with the Micro vehicles and figures.

Of course, there were dozens of new action figures and new versions of familiar heroes and villains—and that was just the Kenner line. Due to the success of *Star Wars*, there were new licensees worldwide and new products ranging from candy to underwear (including Underoos) for a true diehard collector to pursue.

Personally, it was my emotional connection to *Empire*, the film, that really cemented my love for *Star Wars* and turned me into a collector, scrambling to try to pick up much of the stuff that I had passed on the previous three years while it was still available—if a bit dusty—on some store shelves.

Before I get to your questions, I must tell you that I've never gotten more mail on a single topic quicker than on *Insider* #47's challenge on the strange Montgomery Ward catalogue figures from 1977. Because of this special *Empire* issue, and because I want to devote adequate space to the

challenge answer, we'll delve into it in the next column.



### GREEK EMPIRE

I need your help on an item I got when *Empire* was in its heyday. I have the complete 200-card set of Greek *The Empire Strikes Back* cards from 1980. The set does have a flaw. It has some *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* cards included randomly. I've been trying to get a fair value on this set for a while from dealers, but most people seem puzzled. Thank you for any help you can give me.

**SAM STONE** Tucson, AZ

What a pleasure to get a letter from Sam, one of the first dealers from whom I ever bought rare *Star Wars* trading cards sets at conventions many years ago. The Greek *Empire* cards are an anomaly: strange, unlicensed, difficult to complete as a set—and thus highly desired by card collectors. I say strange, because as Sam notes, there are scattered *Star Trek* cards (most from the TV series), *Star Wars* photos, images taken from stickers, repeated images (some right after each other), poor quality printing—in short, bizarre enough to attract collectors like me and *Star Wars*



(ABOVE) CLOUD CITY PLAYSET WAS PART OF THE MICRO COLLECTION INTRODUCED FOR *EMPIRE*. (RIGHT) BOBA FETT UNDEROOS WERE, AS THE SONG WENT, "UNDERWEAR THAT'S FUN TO WEAR."





card specialist Nick Stathis.

Nick points out that "ΠΟΛΕ-  
ΜΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΣΤΡΩΝ," a phrase  
found throughout the set, literally  
means "War of the Stars," and notes  
that collectors look at the Greek  
cards as two different sets based on  
whether there is small or large let-  
tering on the top of the photo on the  
card front. There are stamped and  
handwritten prize redemption cards  
also found in some packs of the  
cards which, Nick notes, came in  
two wrapper variations: plain yel-  
low background or a patterned  
brown/yellow background. Then  
there is the elusive card #120, which  
supposedly could be redeemed for a  
bicycle...if the card exists. Sam's set  
may be proof that it does. So what  
does all this mean for price?  
Basically that it's a seller's market.  
Sealed packs of five cards are selling  
for \$5-plus, full shelf cartons of 100  
packs bring \$200 to \$225 at auction.  
But a complete set of the same let-  
tering size and including card #120?  
I'd bet that some collector would  
pay at least twice the price of a car-  
ton...or more.

## DARTH BETA

I recently went to a swap  
meet and found a copy of *The  
Empire Strike Back* for \$3 on Beta.  
Since they don't make Beta any-  
more, is this worth anything?

**ADAM GUTIERREZ**  
Compton, CA

Well, it was certainly worth \$3  
to you at the time! Actually, a lot of  
collectors prize these tapes for the  
packaging, precisely because the  
Beta format doesn't exist anymore.  
All three of the classic trilogy films  
are available on Beta, and in good  
shape with the packaging intact  
usually sell for \$5 to \$6.

## EX-FLING FIGHTER

I have an old Boba Fett  
action figure. My ex-boyfriend said  
they only made, like, 500 of them.  
Personally I don't see a difference  
in the newer one my brother has,  
except the rocket pack is different.  
And as ex-boyfriends do tend to  
lie to their ex-girlfriends, I'm not

sure it's worth that much more. I  
can't seem to get my hands on a  
price guide. I've been tearing my  
hair out about this since  
Christmas. Help!

**SARAH GREEN Sparta, TN**

Presuming you aren't bald by  
now, Sarah, and without me giving  
advice to the lovelorn—which my  
Insider license doesn't cover—I'd  
suggest you scurry over to the near-  
est bookstore and take a look at my  
Action Figure Archives (Chronicle  
Books, 1999) to figure out which of  
the many Hasbro/Kenner Fett ver-  
sions you have. Then run to the clos-  
est magazine shop and take a peek  
at one of the monthly toy maga-  
zines that run updated price guides.  
I can assure you that Hasbro, like  
Kenner before it, is a mass market  
company; their minimum produc-  
tion run of a figure is more like  
50,000, but never 500.



OBI-WHOPPER: BURGER KING WAS THE PLACE TO GET THESE AWESOME  
EMPIRE DRINKING GLASSES IN THE SUMMER OF 1980.

## BOSS GLASS

I have several drinking glass-  
es from Burger King from Episodes  
V and VI that show scenes from  
these two movies. The ones from  
*The Empire Strikes Back* have some  
of the characters' names and infor-  
mation about them (Luke  
Skywalker, Darth Vader), and the  
ones from *Return of the Jedi* show  
scenes from the movie and  
describe the action. They've never  
been used. I wondered what they  
might be worth.

**GAIL COBLE Burlington, NC**

The glasses used to be quite  
abundant at toy, comic and sci-fi

shows, and since they were pro-  
duced in the tens of millions as pre-  
miums to promote the films, they  
are still quite common. In mint con-  
dition, they are still selling for \$3 to  
\$5 each. At that price, they are rea-  
sonable enough to buy one set to  
use and another to put away as a  
collectible from your favorite film!

## BOUNTY NUMBER

As soon as the Boba Fett life-  
size replica went on sale through  
the Insider I placed my order. It is  
the coolest piece in my collection.  
My question is, how many of those  
were made? The number on my  
base says #111, but out of how  
many?

**ERIC DeYOUNG**  
McHenry, IL

With practically no dialog,  
what made Boba Fett work was the  
incredible costume designed by the

armor. All-in-all, one of those "must-  
have" pieces to save up for, for the  
true Fett-o-phile. There will only be  
350 of the Boba Fett replicas ever  
made worldwide.



PATCH CATCH: THIS DARTH  
VADER PATCH LITERALLY  
GLOWED WITH THE FORCE.

## GLOW IN THE DARK SIDE

The grammar school I went  
to had a book club where students  
could buy books that were sent to  
the classroom. I ordered a *The  
Empire Strikes Back* picture book  
that came with an iron-on patch.  
The patch has a red-background  
with Darth Vader holding a  
lightsaber with the words, "May  
the Force Be With You" under-  
neath. When placed under a lamp,  
the 'saber and phrase glow a  
bright green (and it still does). On  
the back of the patch there are  
directions on how to apply it. It  
has a 1981 copyright. Have you  
heard of this item? Does it have  
any value besides sentimental?  
Thank you.

**CATHERINE DROUGAS**  
Chicago, IL

Thank you, Catherine—  
you've just cleared up a small mys-  
tery for me. I've had a few of these  
for years, but I never knew where  
they came from (and I never knew  
until now that they glowed in the  
dark—and they do!) But I think sen-  
timental value is the price to put on  
it, since to me that's worth a lot  
more than the \$1 or \$2 each a col-  
lector would pay.

## SCOUTING FOR ANSWERS?

PLEASE SEND YOUR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ABOUT COLLECTIBLES TO:  
SCOUTING THE GALAXY, P.O. BOX 2898, PETALUMA, CA 94953-2898. INDIVIDUAL  
REPLIES AREN'T POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF TIME CONSTRAINTS, BUT WE'LL ANSWER  
THE QUESTIONS OF BROADEST INTEREST IN THE COLUMN. LETTERS ARE EDITED  
FOR GRAMMAR, SENSE AND LENGTH.



# REBEL RUMBLINGS: OUR READERS WRITE

continued from page 9

since I was a 10-year-old boy in 1977. Nothing about Star Wars has ever disappointed me ... until now. I am responding to "Why Chewie?" in Insider #47. I have to admit I have not yet read Vector Prime, so I am sure you can imagine my dismay at hearing of the death of Chewbacca. What was more troubling to me was the reason given as to why Chewbacca was killed.

To kill off a major character just to shake things up, as was implied by Shelly Shapiro in your article, does not do justice to either the fans or the character killed. If Del Rey cannot find new and interesting things to do with the original characters, then perhaps they should just let them go. The expanded Star Wars universe is populated with such a rich variety of characters that I find it hard to believe the writers need to kill off major characters just to make things interesting.

The heroes of the original Star Wars trilogy have become timeless. They have taken their place in the pantheon of other epic hero archetypes. Anyone who was prompted to look more deeply into mythology because of Star Wars, or who has at least seen the Magic of Myth exhibit or book, could tell you why arbitrarily killing Chewie was just plain wrong.

**JOSEPH T. WHITE, JR. Dighton, MA**

Again, an article in Insider #47 generated a strong response. Several

readers said they were put off by Del Rey Books' seemingly arbitrary killing off of Chewie, and the answers given by the publisher in "Why Chewie?" were not enough for fans of the mighty Wookiee. Here's one more doozy:

AFTER READING THE ARTICLE that explains Chewie's death and why he was picked to die, I still can't understand why they picked him—or, for that matter, why they picked anyone to die. All the reasons were a little hard to grasp. "How much drama is there anymore?" I'll tell you right now, there's plenty of drama. Enough drama that you don't have to kill Chewbacca at the drop of a hat.

What's next? Is Del Rey going to recommend that Luke turn into a giant bug? Will that keep the drama going? Will his Force powers be duplicated so that nobody will be able to withstand his all-powerful "Force Bug" abilities? Will he go to the dark side and threaten every sentient creature in the galaxy that he'll decimate them with his newfound power? Not hardly. Well, come to think of it, since they killed Chewbacca, I guess anything's possible. So I guess I can look forward to the new book Star Wars: The Dark Bug. That ought to keep the drama going. It should be a real tension-builder.

**SCOTT WENDT Sacramento, CA**

## STAR OF DVD

I can't believe Star Wars fans will have to wait to see the films on DVD.

## "...KILLING CHEWIE WAS JUST PLAIN WRONG."

**JOSEPH T. WHITE, JR. Dighton, MA**

That's ridiculous! Isn't it ironic that Star Wars has been breaking technology barriers like crazy, yet Lucasfilm has chosen to release Episode I only on a soon-to-be antiquated format? Star Wars fans deserve to see the films in the best possible format. Releasing the films on video only is like releasing the soundtrack on vinyl only, or worse, on eight-track. Please, somebody tell me Episode I will come out on DVD around the same time as the video and that the other three films aren't far behind.

**MIKE AXTELL Portage, MI**

I wish I could tell you that, Mike—I'm just as anxious as you are. But right now, Lucasfilm has stated there are no plans to release any of the four Star Wars films on DVD "in the foreseeable future," and definitely not in 2000. The word is that George Lucas wants to do "something special" for the DVDs and is currently too busy working on Episode II. We get letters like yours all the time, so we know the demand is there (and here as well). Let's just hope that when the Star Wars saga does make it to DVD, Lucasfilm will put it together along these lines...

I AGREE WITH JENNIFER Cox (Rebel Rumbblings, Insider #47) about how we must never forget or ignore the

original versions of our classic trilogy, and your response about how they must be made available for fans once the DVD editions are made. Owning both the original classic trilogy and the Special Edition on DVD would be a Star Wars fan's ultimate dream. But I've come up with something that can top even that.

Like yourselves, I love many of the improvements brought about by the Special Edition but also mourn the loss of some great elements that I felt worked better the first time around. As we all know, George Lucas has said he wants to make the greatest possible DVD for the Star Wars saga, offering as many options as possible for fans to enjoy. How awesome would it be to have a DVD that allows viewers to program their own versions of the film by combining scenes from both versions of the trilogy, thus creating their own personal, definitive narratives?

It would be like programming a CD, where you get to listen to the tracks in the order of your liking—picture a version of A New Hope where Han shoots Greedo first but the Death Star still blows up with a ring of fire. If the DVD will not be available until a few years from now, who knows how advanced the technology will be by then!

**J.C. CORREA Flushing, NY**

## DEAR 2-1B

2-1B's angry tirade on the editorial page of Insider #47 sparked an avalanche of replies to the embittered medical droid. Surprisingly, even though he used the editorial to attack other Star Wars characters and the Insider, much of the mail (though not all) was supportive of the unsung Rebel hero—here is just a very small sampling. 2-1B will be back periodically to get to more of your letters and dispense advice for the loveless, so keep those cards and emails coming!

I FEEL BAD that you have not gotten the recognition you deserve, but you should really look at the lighter side of things. Heck, not many people (or droids, for that matter) get to even be

an action figure. I mean, look how many droids it takes to keep the Star Wars universe going, but only a small percentage get to have the pleasure of being cast in plastic and sold around the world. 2-1B medical droids are featured in a lot of books, too. I'm sure Mr. Skywalker is very thankful you fixed his hand, and when he was frozen you warmed him up. So look at the bright side of things, and it will cheer you up, I'm sure.

**SEAN SPLANE Newerk, DE**

Sure Sean, and I'm sure it's easy for you to "look at the bright side"—after all, you're sitting pretty in Delaware while I'm free-floating in a Rebel star cruiser, light-years from the nearest oil bath. Meanwhile, FX-7 is given a prestige position on a new medical frigate, just because he knows whose joints to grease. Go ask the hypocrites behind the Star Wars Insider why my column is buried on page 80—clearly, they're afraid of what I have to say.

See, Sean, while you are accurate about my heroism, you fail to see the sim-

ilar pattern at work here. After all, this is the 20th Anniversary issue for The Empire Strikes Back, the movie where I save the day. But I ask you, where is my lavish multi-page interview? James Earl Jones, Billy Dee Williams, Lawrence Kasdan—did any of these guys save Luke Skywalker's rear end even once? I did, twice. But on to your letters...

I SYMPATHIZE with your mistreatment. Your figure is one of my favorites, and you should be treated with more respect. After all, you did give Luke a new hand and treated him on Hoth. On Hoth, though, you must realize that Han Solo saved Luke—you revived him. I hope that in the future Star Wars Insider will have a good article about you. Please write, and good luck in the New Republic.

**JORDEN MAURO Wells, NY**

Jorden, your sympathy is sweet but unnecessary, because I know in my simulated heart that, no matter what the Star Wars Insider says, I'm the most efficient medical droid in the galaxy, much more



Allison Fends of Carbondale, IL, drew this tribute to the mighty med droid.

capable than FX-7, and certainly possessing a better bedside manner. But of course I'm happy for FX-7. He deserves his success. Despite his obvious lack of experience. And depth.

As for "Commander" Solo saving Skywalker on Hoth, what would he have done without my handy bacta tank, hmhm? Jet over to Tatooine for a quick





## MEET MARA JADE

SINCE YOU WERE KIND ENOUGH to share your photos of Mara Jade (as portrayed by Shannon Baksa in *Insider* #47), I thought I would share my photos of Mara Jade (as portrayed by Mara Jade). Mara Jade is my two-year-old daughter. I was so taken with the name the first time I ever heard it, I instantly knew it belonged to a strong, independent character. It is my hope that I can encourage that kind of strength and independence in my daughter as well. I also like the name because the average person does not instantly recognize it as a *Star Wars* name—most people comment on how beautiful the name is. I have to agree.

**FRANK BONO (Mara's father) Hollywood, MD**

Great ideas, J.C.—here's hoping it happens!

## STAR WARS ROCKS AGAIN

I'D LIKE TO THANK Jon Bradley Snyder for "Star Wars Rocks 2" in *Insider* #47. Through that article he opened me up to Twin Sister, who is without a

doubt one of the most ingenious bands ever. What better subject to make music about than *Star Wars*? I'm still looking for some of the other albums in that section, but for now, Twin Sister has made me very happy.

**MATTHEW J. NORD  
Auburn, NY**

thaw? The simple fact, which the *Star Wars Insider* refuses to acknowledge, is that I alone saved Luke Skywalker's life, and therefore the galaxy and all beings within it. Thank you for your well wishes—I will need them, as the *New Republic* will no doubt require extensive medical expertise due to its leaders' short-sightedness.

I BELIEVE YOU MIGHT be more human than your makers captured in your metal frame. I really enjoyed your humorous remarks detailing several dealings of yours, including overthrowing the Empire and crushing the Emperor. I give you much more credit for all you've done in the film world. I have your action figure next to my make-up mirror, so I see you every morning. So, my favorite droid, don't bust a rotator cuff—sometimes it takes Hasbro a little longer to make 12-inch figures of real good-looking droids like yourself.

**SANDY BOWER Levittown, PA**

Which brings me to another thing about FX-7. Just because he's got all

those arms doesn't mean he knows how to use them. I can accomplish more with my two sophisticated, multi-purpose prongs than that refrigerator-sized lum-max could ever do. I mean, was it FX-7's quick thinking that saved over 90 Rebels on the transport carrier Bright Hope during the Battle of Hoth? I think not—because it was me who saved those poor saps. But what thanks do I get, Sandy? Now you see my point. Your letter was very welcome, except for the crack about me being "human."

YOU ARE AN ANTIQUATED, past-your-prime droid whose only claim to fame was simply treating Luke Skywalker twice near the time of the Battle of Hoth. Don't bust on Mara Jade. As the former Emperor's Hand, second in command to Talon Karrde, wife of Luke Skywalker, Jedi Knight, and now *Star Wars Insider* covergirl, she has accomplished more than any medical droid could ever dream of. You think you could have saved poor Chewbacca? Yeah, right. Chewie helped destroy the first Death Star,

You weren't the only one, Matthew. Once again, "Star Wars Rocks" rocked.

STAR WARS ROCKS 2" (*Insider* #47) was such a success—the second one was just as good as the first! Why not make a "Star Wars Rocks" CD with tracks like Meco's "The Empire Strikes Back (Medley)," and "The Saga Begins" by Weird Al? Having a CD would be so awesome!

**LINDSEY BOWES  
Pittsburgh, PA**

I AM LOOKING FORWARD to the new movies, your next issue—anything that will afford me more time in the *Star Wars* universe. I have some *Star Wars*-themed songs and band names for inclusion on the list published in *Insider* #47. They all come from two different ska samplers. On *Skarmageddon* #4 (Moon Records, 1999) are the bands Norton's Imperial Guard (not absolutely sure it's *Star Wars*, but sure sounds close) and OBI. (Skabba the Hut's "Fat Guy on My Head" also appears on this compilation.) On *Hey Brother 2* (Vegas Records, 1997) are the songs "Luke and Leia" (by Teen Heroes) and "Planet Hoth" (by Course of Ruin). May the Force be with you!

**JASON B. WHITE  
Columbus, OH**

LOVED PART II of the *Star Wars Rocks* articles. You may well be aware

of this already, but there's another song to add to your list. Last year, the talented duo Cibo Matto—who produce a cool blend of rock, hip-hop, trip-hop, and progressive rhythms—released their awesome *Stereotype A* album. I was delighted to find on track six ("Sci-Fi Wasabi") mention our favorite Jedi: "Obi-Wan Kenobi is waiting for me..." and "Obi-Wan Kenobi told me in the lobby."

That's all for now. But let me just say that it gives me great peace of mind to know that Allan Kausch, keeper of *Star Wars* continuity, is a "punk/ska die-hard." Like us, a true Rebel!

**MATT J. CAETANO  
Los Angeles, CA**

Matt, I couldn't agree with you more.

## SOMEONE'S GOTTA THINK ABOUT IT

IN *INSIDER* #47, KEVIN COPP asked what the purpose of the stormtroopers' armor was. My question is, what is that weird little cylinder stuck on the back of their belts? In my opinion, it looks like it's just the right size for an emergency supply of Oreos.

**LISA Y. HOOKER  
San Antonio TX**

Good theory Lisa, but my question is, would a stormtrooper eat an Oreo whole, or would he open it up first and lick the creamy center? My money's on a quick yet decisive lick. ☺

but you didn't hear him crying that he didn't get his medal. You wish you could be as creative as Dr. Evazan—you don't have a death sentence on even one system. And lay off BoShek—he introduced Obi-Wan to Chewie, setting up the events that rocked the galaxy.

**GERALD CARPENTER  
Palmyra, PA**

Nice try, Gerald, but you're really beginning to fog my breathing apparatus. First of all, Chewie's death would definitely have been prevented had I been on board the Falcon—let's not forget, I'm the medical droid who patched up a little guy named Luke Skywalker, so I think I know a thing or two about saving lives. Dr. Evazan is a drunk with anger management problems, and don't get me started on BoShek—he claims that just because he brought together Luke and Han, he's some kind of hero, when clearly I'm the true savior for ensuring victory at the Battle of Hoth.

Finally, Jerry, you may believe in your organic little mind that Mara Jade

has accomplished more than me, but do me a favor and don't put a limit on how much "any medical droid could ever dream of." Let me tell you, pal, we can dream of a lot—even a droid as rudimentary as, say, FX-7 (as a purely random example) can summon up the faintest spark of a dream in his crude circuitry. And if it weren't for my grand dreams of a galaxy at peace, we would have never saved Luke and toppled the Empire. So pardon me, *Star Wars Insider*, if I dare to dream.

## NEED ADVICE? GOT A RESPONSE?

Send your letters on all topics to: DEAR 2-1B, c/o REBEL RUMBLINGS, P.O. Box 111000, Aurora, CO 80042, or email [RebelRumblings@aol.com](mailto:RebelRumblings@aol.com) and put "DEAR 2-1B" in the subject heading. Letters may be edited for clarity and space considerations. *Star Wars Insider* is not responsible for any unsolicited material received. The opinions of 2-1B, a medical droid allied with the Rebellion, do not represent those of Lucasfilm Ltd. or *Star Wars Insider*.





Marco Nero is an Australian based conceptual designer and storyboard artist. His clients have included Universal Studios (Sequest DSV) and Lightstorm Productions (Titanic). The original painting of "Surfin' Fett" is owned by Boba Fett actor Jeremy Bulloch. If you've got an idea for this page, or would like to submit your own work, write to: "LAST PAGE," c/o Star Wars Insider, P.O. Box 111000, Aurora, CO 80042, for submission guidelines. DO NOT SEND ARTWORK WITHOUT GETTING GUIDELINES FROM US FIRST.



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